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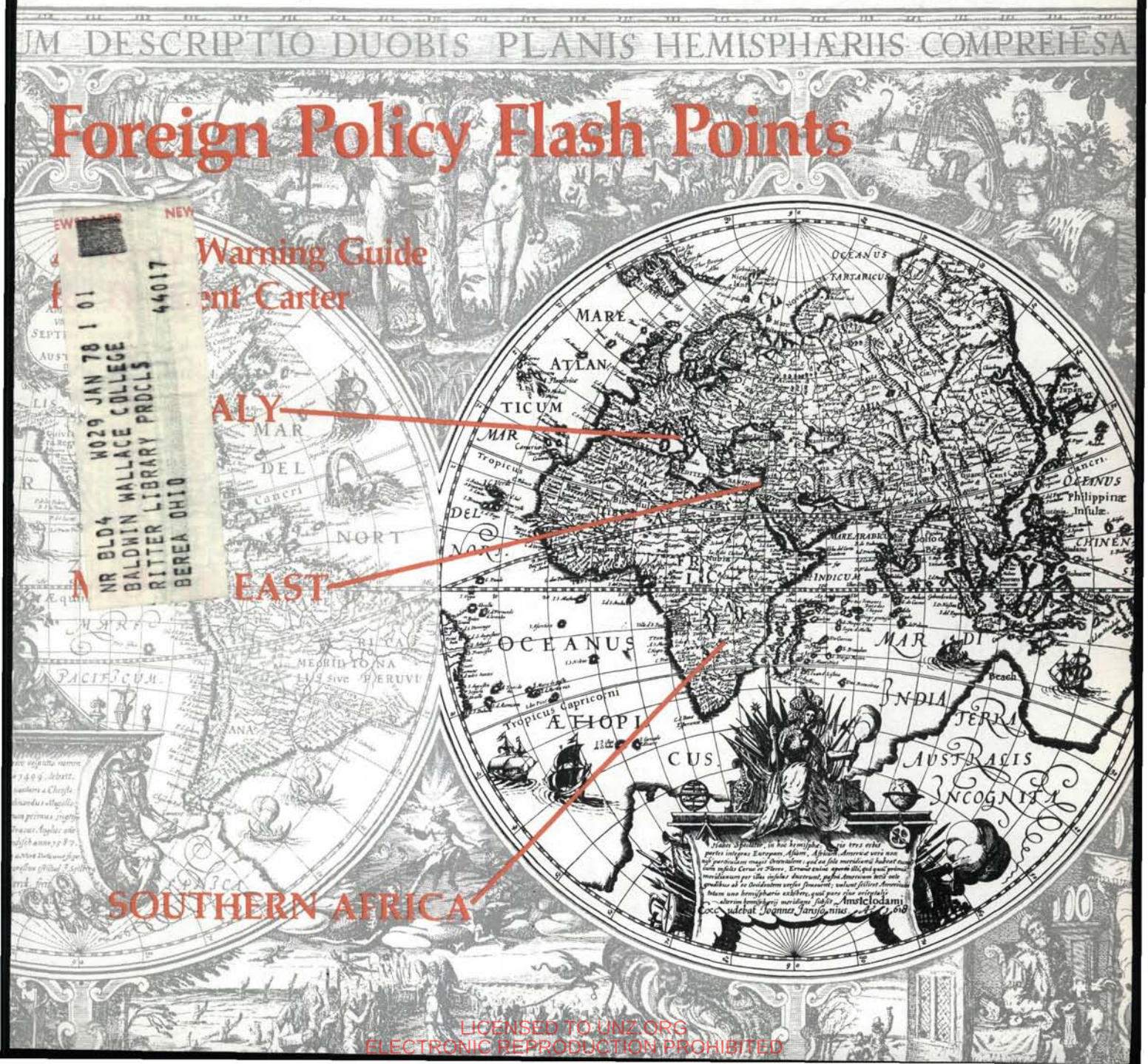

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February 12, 1977

A New Set of Symbols

The most significant social phenomenon of recent days, I think, is not the weather, not the fireside chat, not the energy bill; it's the 12-hour TV broadcast in prime time to tremendous audiences of ABC's dramatization of Alex Haley's *Roots*. With theatrical and calculated brutality, and with no more qualification or shading than a Peking wall poster, it personalizes the ultimate sin of racial subjugation in the United States. Like it or not, that is the foundation on which present relations are built. The show has given America a new set of symbols whose importance we have yet to learn.

The ABC executives exult that their daring commercial risk caused 130 million persons to watch all or part of the eight-part serial, that 36,380,000 homes (45 percent) turned it on, and that its final two-hour episode had the biggest audience in television history. Out it came, the dreadful story which we have spent a century pushing back into our subconsciousness like a shocking childhood incident. The results only Freud can tell. It's good, though, that it's out in the open.

David Wark Griffith's *Birth of a Nation* (1915), based on Thomas Dixon's pop novel *The Clansman*, was the first notable American long film. Here came the Klansmen, like knights, dressed in long white robes, pounding on splendid horses over the hill. And just in time, too, for the stealthy, no-account, lecherous nigger was creeping up on our heroine—or maybe already assaulting her, I've forgotten which. How we cheered!

Was this audience reaction in Mississippi? No, New York. Fifty-six Negroes were lynched in 1915. In 1919, racial riots shook Washington and Chicago; in the latter city white mobs ranged the ghettoes for 13 days with the National Guard unable to subdue them. Returned black soldiers from overseas, fresh from an equality they had never before known, were "uppity." The KKK was revived. The Grand Wizard had 10 Genii; each Realm (state) had a Grand Dragon; there was also a Grand Titan, assisted by six Furies. And if you were poor, from a red clay cabin, and couldn't aspire to be a Cyclops, you could be a Ghoul. That was equivalent to a GI.

Now *Roots* describes the Klan from the blacks' viewpoint—and as it was: a sleazy bunch of vigilantes in bedsheets.

Is *Roots* fair? No, it isn't . . . or how, anyway, can you be fair about slavery? The important thing today is the new symbols it creates. It shows things we would rather forget. The *Washington Star* TV preview, for example, tells how the master buys Kunta's daughter Kizzy "when she was 16, and raped her as soon as he brought her home." But is that the word? Morally, yes; legally, no; the black had no rights which the master was bound to respect. There were local ordinances against cruelty of course, poorly enforced, supposed to protect blacks and other livestock.

The huge audience watched sickened and spellbound for a week, the plantation owner with southern courtesy asking his guest if he would enjoy the privilege of the slave quarters, suh, before he retired? "No," says the guest, equally graciously, "Ah'm tired." How the hearts of southern mothers were wrung by the knowledge of the temptations to which their growing boys were exposed.

The new leader of the black caucus in the House, Rep. Parren Mitchell (D, Md.), told a $10-a-plate luncheon of middle-class black professionals here last week that he was so worked up by *Roots* that he could not endure it after the second episode. He was glad, he said emotionally, that no white friend called on him at just that moment—he could not have controlled his rage.

Roots is almost unrelieved by humor. It weights every scale against the whites, though it throws in a compassionate white-trash overseer who would have surprised Simon Legree.

The Growth of the American Republic, by Morison and Commager, presents another side of plantation life: "There was no physical repulsion from color in the South. White children were suckled by black mammies, and played promiscuously with the pickanin-

(continued on page 30)

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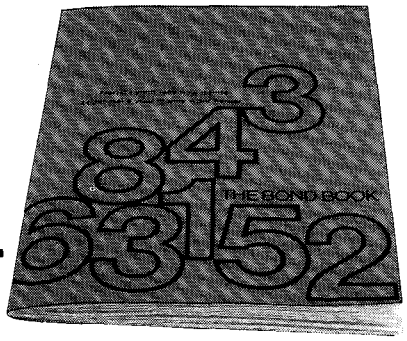

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

A Journal of Politics and the Arts, Vol. 176, No. 7, Issue 3240, February 12, 1977. Published weekly (except the issues of January 8, July 16, August 13, August 27, December 31) and distributed by *The New Republic, Inc.*, 1220 19th Street, N.W. Washington, DC 20036. Phone 331-7494. Single copy, 75¢; Yearly subscriptions, $21; foreign, $24; students, $14.

Send all remittances and correspondence about subscriptions, undelivered copies and changes of address to Subscription Department, *The New Republic*, 381 West Center Street, Marion, Ohio 43302. Copyright 1977 by *The New Republic, Inc.* Item g. Second class postage paid at Washington, DC and additional mailing offices. Indexed in Reader's Guide.

The cover: detail from a map of the world first published in 1618 by Jan Jansson of Amsterdam; obtained from the Library of Congress Geography and Map Division, through the assistance of Barbara Albert.

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Cabinet Government? Unlikely

Exaggeration is the language of politics. Combine that with what C. Vann Woodward has identified as a characteristically southern predilection: the fantasy of perfection. Together, these may give you some small insight into the mind of Jimmy Carter. So it's now "cabinet government" under which we live, and the president will invite the press into each cabinet meeting to prove it.

The cabinet as a collegial decision-making body was not envisioned in the Constitution. In 1803 Chief Justice Marshall's opinion in *Marbury* v. *Madison* referred to the heads of the executive departments collectively as a "cabinet." Since then the cabinet as an institution has become a great phantom of American government—much discussed but seldom seen. By Andrew Jackson's time it was the kitchen cabinet that mattered, and this is how it's been, more or less, ever since. Some presidents have made more effective use of their cabinets than others. FDR's became a forum to refract the debates within his own head. Lincoln used to pour out his own melancholy to his cabinet but, as the travails of Secretary Seward indicate, rarely made it a genuine partner in critical decisions. Under Eisenhower, we learn from Emmet John Hughes's *The Ordeal of Power*, the cabinet became a prayer meeting. With John Foster Dulles and Ezra Taft Benson as pious intermediaries, that may well have been a high point in cabinet influence over the course of events.

Genuine cabinet responsibility for important decisions is a nice idea. It might be an effective curb on presidential caprice. But it won't happen. There is little momentum in this country for a revolution in the conception of the presidency. And there certainly won't be much pressure of that sort from this particular cabinet, composed mostly of men and women who are part of the president's lengthened shadow and hardly powers in their own right. Any change will be interstitial or stylistic.

Carter and his people are talking about two such changes, one silly and one promising. Opening cabinet meetings to the press, far from enhancing their importance, is likely to inhibit cabinet members from expressing candidly their disagreements with the president. On the other hand the proposal we hear more frequently these days (and one that Hamilton Jordan is said to support) of having cabinet members appear regularly before Congress, is a fine idea. Already we hear fears for the separation of powers; it is more probably fear of exposure.

New Faces of 1977

Hope for the new administration does not lie in chimerical institutional reforms such as reviving the cabinet, but in the quality of individual appointees. We have suggested in recent weeks that President Carter's top appointments, taken together, were less than lustrous. But we have been pleasantly surprised by many of the second-tier appointments that have followed.

Carter did keep one of his promises: many of the folks he brought to town for back-up are new here. Some observers may worry about the inexperience of the rookies. We think the freshness is a good thing. But the most interesting story is of the many seasoned and idealistic outsiders whom the Carter team has put into significant administrative positions, or at posts where social imagination and originality have direct access to effective power.

It is not inevitable that a new president bring with him a new generation. Jimmy Carter has. Many of those closest to him say they wouldn't be in politics but for him, and they're now at the top. Others who now walk the marble corridors, albeit in second rank, were in politics for years—as outsiders and critics. They are veterans of Mississippi Summer, the Vietnam Moratorium, the consumer movement, Gene Mc-

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Carthy's 1968 presidential challenge. Feisty and opinionated, they have been schooled in opposition. They will not be true to their pasts if they failed to discomfort their superiors.

Their cohort is not as large as they might have hoped, and they expected to find themselves among more women and blacks than seems to be the case. Carter as candidate promised more than he could produce. Memories of the 51.3 Committee, which engaged in feminist overkill on Carter's behalf, now magnify his failure to put many women in top jobs. The humiliations experienced by Barbara Blum and Mary King will rankle even the most fervent Carter loyalists. One wonders whether every man appointed meets the austere standards of "ability to run a large operation" that Jody Powell, speaking for Carter, said these two women did not meet. At the same time, it would be silly if talented people of either sex and race were kept out of jobs when their talents are needed, to fill some arbitrary quotas.

The most prominent protestant in power is Andy Young, who may be one of the country's most influential office-holders.

The White House itself now is home office to a few for whom being a critic on the outside had been a way of life. Joe Onek, former director of the Center for Law and Social Policy, is the health care specialist on Stuart Eizenstat's domestic affairs staff. Simon Lazarus, a public-interest lawyer, works in the same offices on governmental reorganization and regulatory reform. At the Office of Management and Budget there are Harrison Wellford, an old Nader trooper and Phil Hart staffer, and W. Bowman Cutter, not a movement man himself but certainly among the best of the new breed. Carter's chief speech writer, James Fallows, almost impudently young, is a very old-fashioned moralist of the liberal left.

Dr. Brzezinski has hired at the National Security Council some people whose presence should leave Suetonius, the author of a very critical profile of Brzezinski (*TNR*, January 1 & 8) reeling: Jessica Tuchman, a peace politics activist with a PhD in nuclear biophysics and biochemistry; David L. Aaron, a fresh mind free of dogma; and Rick Inderfurth with McGovern stripes and experience on the Senate Intelligence Committee.

As a staff member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Richard Moose helped expose our secret bombing of Cambodia; now he is at the State Department. Joe Duffey, former ADA chairman and Democratic peace candidate for the US Senate from Connecticut, also is at State, along with Patt Derrian, a Mississippian who took great risks over a decade to bring her state back into the union. Walter Slocombe, who was an attorney for Morton Halperin in his suit against Henry Kissinger, will be a deputy to the undersecretary for international security affairs at the Pentagon.

At HEW, Secretary Joseph Califano has appointed an immensely able UAW political operative, Dick Warden, as one of his assistant secretaries. Another HEW appointee, Mary Berry, brings extraordinary plaudits and credits to her responsibilities in education. Anne Wexler, a peace activist and party reformer, takes over as deputy undersecretary at Commerce.

Sam Brown, now treasurer of Colorado and perhaps the most charismatic peace movement leader of the '60s, is slated to become director of ACTION, combining Vista and the Peace Corps. This last appointment symbolizes it all.

This list does not a government make, though there are scores of others whose appointments constitute a welcome sign of what might be possible in Carter's Washington. Less than a month after the Republicans left town, this already is a more interesting place to work.

Double Dippers

One of the glories of the Roman army was that it provided excellent benefits and comfortable retirement pensions for all citizens of Rome who served. At its peak, it also offered a way of seeing the world and visiting the barbarian provinces without the usual inconveniences of military service: no drafty tents, few forced marches, less slogging from camp to camp. The army lived its latter days in sound fortresses—castles of a sort—with indoor plumbing, domestic service, hot food and warm beds. Today, the US military seems to be striving toward that ideal of the past, trying to maintain a standard of comfort among its ranks of 2.1 million that is truly imperial.

The Pentagon itself has begun to worry about personnel costs, which now sop up roughly 60 percent of its annual appropriation. One of the first items to come up for review probably will be the pension system. Military retirees (who often are not old soldiers) enjoy the most generous of all government pensions, and the cost is climbing rapidly. Last year, in a Pentagon budget of $110 billion, $8.2 billion went directly to retirees as cash benefits. Next year the cost will rise to $9.1 billion. According to Pentagon estimates—which are notoriously optimistic—it will climb in succeeding years to $9.8 billion, $10.6 billion, $11.3 billion and $12.1 billion. The cost seems to go up $.8 billion a year, just like clockwork. This is the price of just one of a score of federal retirement programs, including Social Security, that have in effect "promised" to pay out $200 to $300 billion to retirees at some time in the future. It is an enormous promise.

These figures would be less troublesome if the money helped retire weary soldiers to Miami and Ft.

(*continued on page 8*)

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Correspondence

Good Old Days

To the editors:

Homer Bigart nods—just a bit—when he says in his review of Gloria Emerson's book (*TNR*, Jan. 22) that "there was no public outcry" against correspondents like myself who went to Hanoi. Perhaps not for the others. But does he not forget the Defense Department's outcry against "the Hanoi Times," the charges by DOD's PR man Arthur Sylvester that I was carrying the propaganda hod for Hanoi by reporting that North Vietnamese officials said we had killed 89 and wounded 405 in air raids on Namdinh (how small those figures sound today!), *The New Yorker*'s lovely cartoon of the Army mess sergeant: "Scratch Salisbury steak. It's orders from the top!" or the Pultizer awarded by the jury and revoked by the judges?

Yes. There was quite an outcry in those days. True it died down. But it should hardly be forgotten that some most respected correspondents and newspaper editorialists joined in the fun.

Nor was I, as Homer says, "invited" to Hanoi. I badgered, pestered, wrote, petitioned and harassed the North Vietnamese for better than 18 months before a visa was forthcoming. It was my initiative. Not theirs.

Harrison E. Salisbury
The New York Times

Whose Diplomacy?

To the editors:

My, my, how time changes things. Some of the whacks taken at the State Department in the Jan. 22 issue by Roger Morris in "*Your* Diplomacy" ("bloated," "isolated," "client-ridden," and plagued by diplomats who "depend on foreign regimes for their own worth and advancement") bring to mind the slanderous charges hurled at the Department by the right-wing fanatics of the early 1950s. Even more startling is Mr. Morris's conclusion that because "there are far too many to conduct good foreign policy" in the Foreign Service we should bring in "informal outside advisors," increase the role of Congress, and toss in advice from governors and mayors for good measure! Since all of the above (especially the narrow-minded politicos who are so common to Congress, state houses, and city halls) have their own pork barrels to protect or axes to grind, it would seem to make about as much sense to hold a national plebiscite on every foreign policy issue. Personally, I'd prefer that Mr. Carter take his chances on advice from the State Department.

Bruce Reynolds
Warrensburg, Missouri

Endearing Indira?

To the editors:

I am left aghast by the extent to which Nick Eberstadt overdoes pragmatism in "Underappreciated India", *TNR*, Jan. 15.

He seems to think that a state of economic and social chaos justifies Indira Gandhi's outrageous usurpation of civil rights. Jailing the opposition will not solve any problems. Neither will censoring the press. These "emergency" powers have put blinders on India. Anyone voicing new ideas that may solve India's problems is silenced if the almighty Indira does not agree. To solve problems, a nation must have a free exchange of ideas and the chance for leadership. Just imagine the outcry if Ford had ordered the Army to round up Carter and his cronies and throw them in jail in the "interest of the people." Then he could proceed to shut down *The New Republic* because "their liberal attitudes are a threat to the economy."

Another problem is that Mr. Eberstadt tells us that all of India'a problems have come about because it is not really a nation, but rather a mixture of different societies. Actually this is true, but the answer lies not in the "Nehru monarchy," as Eberstadt puts it. The modern Indian state has proven itself unmanageable. The real solution would be a break-up of Indira's empire into several autonomous regions. Large, unopposed, powerful states may possibly work but the total conversion of

(continued on page 30)

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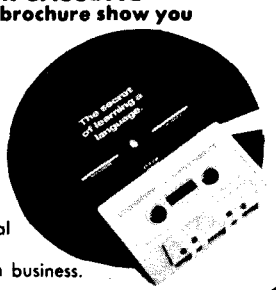

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Lauderdale and carried them through the vicissitudes of old age. But it doesn't. Too often, a military pension serves merely as a second cushion under the career of a none-too-aged federal bureaucrat. The reason is that the military, unlike other pension-granting institutions in the country, allows its people to retire with full benefits not at age 65 or 60, but whenever they have finished 20 years of service. This largesse is compounded by a law—the Dual Compensation Act of 1964—that lets military pensioners collect their retirement checks and a salary from the federal government at the same time. It's called the double dip.

According to a study in progress at the Civil Service Commission, nearly 142,000 former military types collect pensions and also serve as federal employees. As one might expect, most of them work for the Defense Department (about 78,000), though the ample dominions of the Postal Service provide a comfortable second home for about 35,000. The agencies next in rank are the Veterans Administration (7000 dippers), Transportation (3500), Treasury (3000), the General Services Administration (2000), HEW (2000) and NASA (716). Most of these folks are in their 40s and earn, in addition to pensions, federal salaries of between $10,000 and $18,000 a year. Incredibly, about 8000 of these old pensioners have not yet reached their 40th birthdays. They are clustered like honeybees around the humming federal enclaves of Washington; Norfolk, Virginia; San Diego and San Francisco.

No one begrudges the pensioner his old-age income, but many do resent the fact that the military gives its graduates a unique kind of pay bonus that, because of the way it is given, seems hidden from view. Even the federal civil service, which ranks next in generosity, does not allow retirees to collect a full pension until they have reached age 62 or have been in the service 30 years. And civil servants, unlike the military, do contribute something to their pensions—seven percent of their salaries. As a rule, private pensions are even less generous than the civil service. A study of 271 private plans by the Bankers Trust Company of New York found that only 13 permitted retirement on a normal pension before age 65.

The military's well-padded system lengthens the period during which people can collect pension checks, thus paying most people more for the time they spend outside the service than for active duty. Rep. Les Aspin (D, Wis.), who has done excellent work on the military's money problems, summed it up neatly in a recent article: "The average enlisted man with 20 years in uniform before retirement will receive pension checks over the years amounting to 132 percent of all he earned while working, the average officer 144 percent. . . . A retired civilian, by comparison, will collect 20 to 31 percent of his 20-year earnings in retirement, a federal civil servant about 49 percent, a New York City schoolteacher 106 percent and members of Congress, who aren't noted for shortchanging themselves, 47 percent."

Aspin, of course, has a plan for reforming the military pay and pension systems. It is one of four major proposals that have been drawn up for Congress and will come up for debate later this year. The other three were devised by the Pentagon, the Defense Manpower Commission and Ronald Reagan. They attack military personnel costs with varying degrees of boldness: Reagan by reducing basic pay 12.5 percent to finance a pension fund for the future, with no change in benefits; the Pentagon by phasing in pension benefits more slowly for those with less than 30 years' service; the Manpower Commission by limiting pensions according to length of combat duty; and Aspin by a combination of pay raises and pension reductions. Aspin's would be the most likely to reduce double dipping; it is the only one that would defer payment until the retiree has reached age 55 (with 30 years of service) or age 60 (with 20 years). His plan also would cut back payments to pensioners with other income, withholding one dollar for every two earned on a new job.

The trouble with bringing even the mildest proposal of this kind near Congress is that it inevitably raises a howl, even if designed not to touch the benefits of current retirees. The perception is what matters, and when government employees perceive a threat, they know how to respond. The task is complicated by the fact that congressmen themselves have an interest in not being too harsh on federal pensions. Their own system is one of the more generous, and it's difficult to criticize the military's plan when you may benefit from something similar. In fact, there are dozens of congressmen already on the double dip. The leading example this year is Sen. Howard Cannon (D, Nev.), called "the Big Dipper" by the National Taxpayers Union. Last year, in addition to his Senate salary of $44,600, he took home $11,496 from his military pension as a retired Air Force major general. He will earn more this year because federal pay rates, including those for Congress, soon will go up. Cannon is no small fry: he chairs the Senate Rules and Administration Committee and is a member of Armed Services. This helps explain why it is so hard to get Congress to take a close look at the federal pension system.

Italy's even sicker than England,
and is doing even less about it.

Europe's Sickest Man

Rome

Italy is approaching an economic crisis of historic dimensions. The situation is so bad that one feels something "must" happen, that things cannot possibly continue on their present course. But leaders here act as if it were still possible to carry on as usual, do

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nothing, and hope for the best. They are asking the International Monetary Fund—which means in practical terms West Germany and the United States—for a loan of half a billion dollars. It is a question of great importance for the future of the Atlantic Alliance, and one that President Carter and Secretary of State Vance will have to answer in the next few weeks. One can hardly envy them. There may be no remedy available for what ails Italy.

In the last two years Italy has had an annual inflation rate of 18 percent; Germany, Japan and the US averaged one-third that level. Over the same period salaries have risen 27 percent in the industrial sector, twice the average of other industrialized countries. Unit labor costs have increased 20 percent, more than twice the average of all industrialized nations. By the end of this year, Italy's unit labor costs will be the highest in the world. Italy's productivity is not keeping pace with that of its competitors, but real salaries here are rising four percent annually—more than twice the average. The lira has been devalued by more than 40 percent. Italy leads the west in hours lost through strikes. Imports are rising in spite of the severe devaluation, and the balance of payments is alarming. Italians work the shortest work week, and the fewest days per year in the Common Market, and a remarkably high percentage do not work at all. According to official statistics (and they are highly suspect), there are currently 19 million actively employed Italians, and 13 million living on pensions. The population has increased by six million persons in the past 20 years, but the number of those actively employed actually has dropped—or so we are told—by 750,000.

With the spectre of a massive collapse just around the corner, the Italian government sent its foreign minister to Moscow early in the new year to discuss prospects for Italy granting the Soviet Union more than $600 million in industrial credits. This is slightly more than the amount Italy itself wants to borrow from the IMF. It is an incredible action for a country that desperately needs to reduce nonproductive investment, particularly in the public sector, bring about a substantial reduction in labor cost increases (if not in labor costs themselves), and find some way to regenerate its own industrial apparatus. The proposed credits to the Soviet Union have created considerable tension within the government. Government ministers realize the absurdity of begging for a loan from the IMF while they are negotiating further grants abroad. On the other hand, the Eastern European market is an important one for Italy, and Russian goodwill is vital for Italian business in much of the third world. The Soviet Union presently enjoys some $3 billion of outstanding loans from Italy. $900 million of this was arranged in the early winter of 1975, and was supposed to be used over eight years. To the surprise and discomfiture of the Italians, the Soviets already have used up this line, and are requesting more.

There are two fundamental sources of the crisis, corresponding to the major political parties. On the one hand, we have the Christian Democratic Party (DC), which has governed (if that is the word for it) since 1948. The DC bases much of its strength on a vast clientary system which rewards its faithful with jobs on the public payroll. A DC minister once boasted that in Sicily his party had substituted its own bureaucracy for industry: instead of promoting the development of the region, the DC had simply expanded the public payroll. The bureaucrats in turn exercise tremendous pressure on the government to continue this state of affairs.

The DC also is primarily (but not exclusively) responsible for the sorry state of Italian industry, which is technologically years behind other advanced countries, and which currently is undergoing a "brain drain" as some of the brighter and more adventurous entrepreneurs are shipping out for countries like Brazil, Venezuela, Canada and Australia. At no time have the Christian Democrats seriously attempted to revitalize industry, even though they control a great deal of it through the government's vast holding companies. Instead, the government simply absorbs failing companies and continues to pay salaries, or even more simply picks up corporate deficits on the pretext of aiding exports.

On the other hand, we have the Communists (PCI), who have been calling on their faithful for three decades to destroy capitalism. They are getting quite close to this heady goal, but since there is some danger that they will inherit the ruins of the old order, the minions of PCI secretary Enrico Berlinguer have recently been passing themselves off as the saviors of a pluralistic economy, rather than the gravediggers of capitalism. This has confused a lot of people, not least of all their own rank-and-file, who do not understand why they are being asked to cooperate with their ancient capitalist enemies. The Communists are largely responsible for the high labor costs which beset Italian industrialists, and for the intransigence of the unions as they defend jobs to the death of the last corporation. Since the "hot autumn" of 1969, the Communists and their trade union allies have been winning constantly greater benefits for the working class, regardless of its cost. The result, according to foreign commerce minister Renato Ossola (DC), is that Italy is on the verge of eliminating itself from the industrialized world. The prime mover in this drama is the cost-of-living escalator clause in all national contracts—the *scala mobile*—which is calculated every three months.

Virtually all observers agree that something has to be done to this automatic escalator clause if inflation is to be controlled. Last fall, Premier Giulio Andreotti suggested that the *scala mobile* be calculated every six months instead of every three, but the unions and the left-wing parties rose in indignation. The unions say that the *scala mobile* is untouchable. Instead, they are

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offering a package of tiny adjustments in the number of days worked per year, overtime and workers' mobility. This is insufficient, both for the economy and for potential lenders. Reliable sources report that both the Common Market and the IMF have required some substantial changes in the escalator clause before any further aid is given to Italy. When Andreotti suggested that discounts on railroad travel be eliminated in order to raise public revenues, the railroad workers (who travel free) struck to defend their privileges. (The employees of the telephone company get 160 free calls every trimester, and pay only 25 percent of the annual subscription fee. Electrical company workers get their first 7000 kilowatt hours at less than 25 percent of the price charged the rest of the country.)

It is hard for the PCI to tell its followers that the system must be saved, after calling for its destruction for so long. But at the same time, the PCI has picked up a lot of middle class votes in the last two elections because many Italians believe that only the Communists can bring a measure of order into the national chaos. If the PCI cannot "deliver" the unions—and all the signs are that it cannot—many of these voters are likely to abandon the Communists in the future. Berlinguer and company are in a difficult spot, although their tears over the state of the economy are like those Nero collected in a tiny vase after starting the conflagration of Rome. For now, the PCI speaks with a forked tongue: one day hailing the virtues of pluralism, the next saying—as Berlinguer did recently—that "we intend to challenge this system at its roots, since it is now mature for the revolutionary transformation predicted in the 'Manifesto'." But the Communists have made no clear statements on economic programs. When their most coherent spokesman, Giorgio Amendola, suggested that the party had better do something fast about inflation, before a right-wing dictatorship took over the country (which, as he observed, was the historic pattern), he remained in a minority of one within party councils.

This country is asking us to bail it out. West German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt said that he will support the Italian request for the IMF loan. Should Jimmy Carter do the same? Economically, the money is hardly a drop in the Mediterranean. It will cover less than 5 percent of the increase predicted for the *scala mobile* in 1977. It could be argued that the loan has symbolic political value. In their recent meeting in Germany, Andreotti and Schmidt reportedly agreed on the undesirability of Communist participation in Common Market governments, and Schmidt evidently feels that this can best be achieved by giving Italy more money. Quite aside from the accuracy of this view (it dates, probably, from the days at the end of World War I when Herbert Hoover raised money for Russia on the grounds that if the Russians ate better they would be less likely to support Lenin), German and American taxpayers are entitled to ask if there are any limits to the amount their governments are prepared to spend to test the theory. Italy has done far less than England to fight inflation, and the IMF witheld support from the British until they had voted their modest program into law. Shouldn't the Italians be asked to do the same?

Giving money to the Andreotti government in its current condition only delays the moment of truth. Our own destiny is linked to that of Italy. President Carter, who has spoken well and often of the need to take joint action to resolve the economic malaise of the West, has the chance to demonstrate his courage and consistency in this strategically vital country. He can tell the Italians that the United States wants to help them, but they must show they are prepared to help themselves as well. This means that both major political parties must pay their fair share of the price. Public expenditures must be reduced sharply, and the trade unions will have to make major concessions, particularly involving the *scala mobile*. If this happens, the United States and its allies could and should attempt a cooperative effort to help in the rationalization of the industrial sector, and bring a measure of sanity into a national economy that currently requires a byzantinist to unravel its mysteries.

The Carter administration might try the Solomonic solution of dividing the IMF baby in half, urging that part of the loan be granted at once as a sign of good faith and recognition that something has in fact been accomplished since the Andreotti government took office. But the remainder of the loan should be tied to the successful negotiation of a serious anti-inflationary program which alone will keep Italy solidly in the Western community.

If the Italians—Christian Democrats and Communists alike—cannot find the good sense and determination to do this, then Carter should consider the advice a liberal senator gave to Premier Andreotti in an editorial last week:

> *Perhaps the Italian case, in its willful complexity, has no solution . . . . If Andreotti becomes convinced of this, he should abstain from any action by the government, and permit this society to meet the destiny which it has prepared for itself.*

Michael Ledeen

Michael Ledeen is an American writer in Rome.

COMING:
Ken Bode
On Pornography

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Ian Smith has a plan. What's ours?

Avoiding Disaster in Southern Africa

Just one false step in Rhodesia and the Carter administration could fail the very first test of its capacity to handle a major international crisis. What makes this test even tougher is that the new administration will have to decide its policy in a hurry. Delayed decisions could prove to be a crucial blunder.

The Smith regime's total rejection of the British proposals for a negotiated settlement of the Rhodesian conflict has brought not just Rhodesia but the entire southern part of Africa—from Zambia in the north to South Africa, and from Angola and Namibia in the west to Tanzania and Mozambique in the east—to the edge of the long-predicted conflict. Like it or not, there is no escape for the Carter administration from Henry Kissinger's unfinished business. Kissinger's mistake was not that he helped to thrust the US deeply into the imbroglio of southern Africa, but that he was not more successful. Nevertheless, he set a course for America which, if pursued with vigor and intelligence, could even now prevent one of the major disasters of our time.

The Carter chapter begins with Ian Smith insisting that he has been betrayed. Smith claims to have made a firm agreement last September with the previous US secretary of state, regarding Smith's commitment to majority rule in Rhodesia. He now holds firmly to the position that either the US, Britain or South Africa must back him against the "black extremists" in fulfillment of the Kissinger "agreement," or he will fight on to the bitter end.

What is the truth of his claims to having been betrayed? It is always possible that Kissinger was characteristically ambiguous in his negotiations with Smith. But there seems little reason to doubt Kissinger's insistence that the agreement was only intended as a basis for negotiations, since no final settlement ever was possible without the consent of the black Rhodesian nationalist leaders and their backers—the so-called "front-line" presidents of Tanzania, Zambia, Botswana and Mozambique. Nobody except Smith could believe that a constitutional settlement could simply be imposed on the Africans. The Anglo-American interpretation of the September agreement—as something far less than a final settlement—was, in fact, made explicit to Smith even before the start of the abortive Geneva conference.

The talks in Geneva showed that even the most moderate black leaders were not ready to accept the Smith-Kissinger agreement without settling for themselves the crucial issue of who would control security and defense in Rhodesia during the transition to majority rule. However, the African side at Geneva did, in fact, accept the most important part of the compromise by agreeing that the levers of power during the transition should be held by a British high commissioner—thus conceding the point that security and defense would remain, temporarily, in white hands.

But the notion of a British "colonial" presence is almost as much of an anathema to Smith as the idea of power passing into the hands of those he regards as black extremists. It was on this point that the British proposals were rejected, and Smith again committed the 150,000 white Rhodesians to a hopeless and damaging war, ending predictably in the flight of a majority of the country's white inhabitants—as happened in neighboring Mozambique and near-by Angola—through policies as shortsighted as those being pursued by the Smith regime.

Is it still possible to salvage the Kissinger initiative? Yes—but only if the US and Britain acting together are prepared to commit themselves to a policy which, at first sight, might look unrealistic. It is not really all that bold when judged against what is almost certain to follow if this very last chance of developing an Anglo-American initiative is fumbled.

The scenario for what lies ahead begins with a description of Smith's present strategy. Incredible as it seems, he is deliberately trying to force his neighbor, Mozambique—from whose territory the guerrillas operate—to invite in the Russians and the Cubans. His reason for doing so is that this Rhodesian Walter Mitty really believes that once the "commies" are actively engaged in the war, that would compel the South Africans and the Americans to come to the aid of white Rhodesia as a bastion of "western defense." At the same time Smith proposes to begin unilaterally implementing the Kissinger "agreement"—just as he once unilaterally declared Rhodesia's independence and so plunged the country into its present mess. He will do so by recruiting the support of the "black moderates," the chiefs and other "loyalists." By this stratagem he believes he can rally to his side western opinion (represented for him by *Reader's Digest*).

Smith's chosen method of provoking Mozambique and the Zimbabwe Independence Peoples Army (ZIPA) to enlist the full support of the Russians and Cubans is by continuing to strike across the border into Mozambique. The reasons for doing so are militarily sound. The Israelis have shown that the best way of fighting guerrillas is to hit them in their base camps, and these lie in Mozambique. But Smith knows (and South African Prime Minister John Vorster has warned him of this) that these tactics must drive Mozambique to seek strong external support, since the young republic led by President Samora Machel has not yet had sufficient time to build up an effective national army capable of defending the country's borders. In considering how to defend Mozambique Machel has three

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options: to invite the Russians and/or Cubans to assume the role of training and equipping his army; to invite the Chinese; or to seek military support from the rest of black Africa.

The Russians and Chinese options both could fit in with the African option. Negotiations to raise a combined African army to help defend Mozambique's borders are far advanced. Nigeria, which has the strongest army in black Africa, is likely to be the major partner in such an enterprise. However, it is doubtful whether Nigeria also can undertake the rapid training of the Mozambique army: certainly Nigeria can't produce the sophisticated weapons that will be needed. This will provide an opening for a major foreign power, either Russia or China. Because the Russians already have proved in Cuba, the Middle East and Angola that they have the capacity to produce massive aid quickly, the chances are that Machel will choose Moscow even though his own political sympathies lie closer to Peking.

The presence of the "communist enemy" on South Africa's borders is bound to increase the pressures on Vorster from his right-wing supporters to intervene—and not in the half-hearted way the apartheid republic did in Angola in 1975. But even if Smith's tactics forced South Africa into the war, it must be unthinkable that this would work as well on the Carter administration. Meanwhile, the mischief will have been done.

In the absence of an effective diplomatic initiative, the immediate likelihood is that there will be a build-up of African forces along the Mozambique-Rhodesia border, and that several hundred Russian and Cuban military instructors will arrive to train the Mozambique army. Russian planes might be used to bring in African troops.

All these measures will be concerned strictly with the defense of Mozambique. There is still no intention of involving other Africans, let alone Cubans, in the guerrillas' war against Rhodesia. This war would continue to be fought by black Rhodesians backed by arms from the communist world. It will be difficult, however, to get the mass media (and so world opinion) to make this distinction. So Smith's design of presenting white Rhodesia as defending its "Kissinger agreement" against "international communist agression" very likely could succeed.

If Vorster is able to stick to his present intention of keeping his forces out of Rhodesia, Smith's forces would be overwhelmed in 18 months, according to US, British and South African intelligence sources. The Russians would then, rightly, be able to present themselves as the champions of the triumphant black liberation movement in Rhodesia—and this could decisively influence the next phase in the struggle over South Africa. It would be a considerable breakthrough for the Soviet Union.

The most likely alternative scenario is that South Africa will intervene clandestinely—allowing "volunteers" to bolster the Rhodesian army. Already there are 500 to 800 foreign volunteers (mercenaries, as the black Africans see them) in the Rhodesian forces; they form a large component of the regular army of fewer than 3000 men.

The predictable outcome of any scenario is that white Rhodesia will go down to military defeat; directly or indirectly, the Russians and Cubans will be able to claim their share of the credit; western influence in the third world will suffer a major blow; the chances of an armed struggle against Namibia and South Africa will increase, putting the western nations under heavy pressure to take a clear position toward a besieged South Africa threatened by external and internal violence. Nobody should pretend that such a denouement would not be of major significance, quite apart from the human suffering that it would entail.

The best hope for avoiding this political and human disaster by a successful diplomatic initiative lies in an odd contradiction. For their different reasons, the US, Britain, the front-line African presidents, the black Rhodesians (and many of the white Rhodesians as well) *and* South Africa all share a common interest in wishing to avoid internationalizing the conflict over Rhodesia. All wish to see a quick end to the Smith regime, the policies of which are exclusively responsible for bringing Rhodesia to its present parlous state, and for threatening the security of its neighbors.

The front-line presidents have accepted the tactical necessity of trying to enlist Vorster's cooperation to exert the kind of pressures on Smith that only South Africa can apply. They have opted to face the apartheid regime after first settling the problems of Rhodesia and Namibia. At the same time, the African leaders believe that if Vorster will not lean sufficiently heavily on Rhodesia, it will be necessary to lean on South Africa to encourage him to act more decisively.

Only the US has the clout needed to sustain a credible diplomatic initiative; the main responsibility must lie with Washington. The first step is for the US to make it unmistakably clear to white Rhodesians (and South Africans) that there are no circumstances under which the US would intervene on their side—not even if there are Cubans around. Second—with Britain and the rest of the European community—the US should offer to help Mozambique strengthen its borders against Rhodesian attacks. Third, the US should accept the Africans' endorsement of the Patriotic Front (led by Joshua Nkomo and Robert Mugabe) as the only recognized body for purposes of negotiating a settlement. Fourth, the Americans should promise at least moral support to ZIPA if the Smith regime continues to refuse to negotiate on the British proposals. Fifth, the US should support a UN resolution calling on South Africa to cut off supplies of arms and fuel to Rhodesia, failing which it should declare itself ready to consider appropriate UN action against South Africa. Sixth, the US should join with Western Europe to prevent the

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recruitment of foreign volunteers for service in Rhodesia. Eighth, but by no means least important, the US and Britain must jointly propose acceptable measures to reassure white Rhodesians about their future.

There is a responsibility on Andrew Young himself not to provoke unnecessarily the hostility of important constituencies—as he almost certainly did by his attempt to justify the role of Cubans in Angola as providing some kind of order there. This kind of statement could equally justify the Russian intervention in Hungary or Czechoslovakia. The Cuban leaders are not primarily concerned with helping to establish order in the world; they are proud to admit that their concern is to help "the international revolution." There is clearly some risk in trying to overcompensate for mistakes made by Kissinger in handling the Cuban pressure in Angola, by overlooking the essential fact that the Cubans and Russians intervened in what was a civil war. The official justification for their military role is that it was necessary to oppose the invasion from South Africa; but their intervention in fact occurred months before the first South African troops had crossed the frontier.

Only by announcing such an unequivocal policy can the US and its western allies hope to demonstrate to white Rhodesians, the Vorster regime and the black Africans that the Carter administration stands fully committed to the objective of majority rule in southern Africa. It is also the only way to halt the drift toward internationalizing the conflict over Rhodesia.

It is not certain that even such a bold policy would be successful. But what is predictably certain is that without it southern Africa is heading for disaster—and the west will be the losers.

To judge by some of his statements, Andrew Young is broadly committed to a policy along the lines proposed here. But is Jimmy Carter ready to match *his* actions to the words of his ambassador to the UN?

Colin Legum

Colin Legum is an associate editor of the London *Observer* and editor of the *Africa Contemporary Record.*

No more 'peacemeal' in the Middle East. But what kind of 'progress'?

Is '77 The Year?

On January 21, the day after President Carter's inauguration, White House National Security Adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski dispatched a two-page message to the State Department, classified SECRET, formally launching the new administration's effort to achieve something called "progress" in the Middle East. The message, Policy Review Memorandum #3, requested an analysis of policy alternatives concerning three issues: Arab-Israeli negotiations, levels of US arms aid and new legislation designed to thwart the Arab economic boycott of Israel. With a touch of urgency, Brzezinski requested that State return its response by January 31.

Bureaucratic difficulties being what they are, PRM 3 (as State's response also is called) was not returned on time. But that does not alter the fact that this administration is serious about movement in the Middle East. The Mideast PRM (in past administrations, they were called NSSMs, for National Security Study Memorandums) was the new administration's third, just behind option requests on the Panama Canal dispute and US-Soviet strategic relations. It might have been PRM 2, except that Panamanian Foreign Minister Aquilino Boyd was due in Washington last week. Secretary of State Cyrus Vance declared in his initial press conference that "it is critically important that progress be made this year" in the Middle East. Vance said it with more emotional force than he used in addressing any other topic, and he went on to make it clear that "progress" this year means convening a Middle East peace conference, presumably at Geneva.

For reasons Vance mentioned, and some he didn't, the administration regards 1977 as a propitious year to pursue Middle East progress. Moderates control Egypt, Syria, Jordan and Saudi Arabia. They have stopped squabbling among themselves and are talking about "peace" with Israel. They now acknowledge Israel's right to exist, and seem willing to negotiate face-to-face at Geneva. They have special stakes in reaching a settlement, besides hungering for land captured by the Israelis. Egypt wants to escape its economic maelstrom; Syria wants to capitalize on its political gains in Lebanon and keep the Iraqi wildmen at bay; Jordan wants to reclaim influence (if not sovereignty) over the West Bank; and the Saudis want to ensure their ability to get rich selling oil to the West and receive American help to modernize at their own conservative pace. The Palestine Liberation Organization, nearly decimated militarily in Lebanon and discredited politically, is unprecedentedly subject to moderate pressure. Soviet influence in the Arab world is at low ebb, while American prestige is high. Israel, though weakened by internal political divisions, is militarily strong and should feel secure about American intentions. Short of Henry Jackson v. Jacob Javits, it is hard to imagine two American presidential candidates battling for office from more ardently pro-Israel positions than Gerald Ford and Jimmy Carter.

The Arabs and the Israelis still are far apart on the issues that divide them, but now they appear to agree on what those issues are; and this also makes the possibilities of 1977 tantalizing. Both sides aspire to a

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settlement short of full peace—"non-belligerency" on the Arab side, an "end to the state of war" on the Israeli. Both sides understand that the price for less-than-peace is the return of territory Israel captured in 1967. Both sides now seem to favor some Jordanian involvement in the affairs of the West Bank. And both sides seem to appreciate that they won't get what they want immediately, maybe not for five, 10 or 20 years.

The difficulties also are fully appreciated by the administration. Israel wants more peace than the Arabs are willing to give, while the Arabs want all their land back, not the pieces Israel is willing to surrender. In the West Bank, the Arabs talk about a Palestinian state with "links" to Jordan; Israel wants the ties close enough that the Palestinians will be more interested in taking control of Jordan than of Israel. The supreme difficulty remains that the two sides profoundly distrust each other. Israel fears the Arabs are still intent on its destruction, despite their words. The Arabs think Israel is a militaristic state bent on keeping land it's won in war and on propping up its economy with US aid.

If conditions for progress have never been better, the absence of progress in 1977 will leave things much worse. Economic woes could topple Anwar Sadat, or turn him hawkish. The PLO could stage a comeback. Pro-Soviet radicals could seize power anywhere. Arab unity could collapse. American influence could wither. "All kinds of disruptive factors may occur," Vance observed. UN Secretary General Kurt Waldheim forecast war in two years if there is no progress. An Arab diplomat said in Washington there would be war in 1978—"the war before the nuclear war." And, this cold winter must make the administration especially conscious of what war means: no oil.

The Carter administration has only begun considering its settlement goals and negotiating strategies for the Middle East. PRM 3 apparently suggests anti-boycott steps as part of negotiations, rather than legislation. It recommends nothing on talks or arms. The PRM has to be reviewed in the NSC. Then Carter has to make up his mind and render a Presidential Directive (PDs have replaced National Security Decision Memorandums, NSDMs). Based on reports about PRM 3, and other information, this is where the administration seems to be heading on the main issues:

Timing—Vance will go to the Middle East beginning February 14 with only a "listening brief," that is, genuinely without concrete proposals to make. When he gets back February 21, the administration will begin formulating its positions as to both procedure and substance, then try them out on a string of Mideast leaders scheduled to visit Washington in March and April. Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin is due first, in early March. By that time it should be known whether Rabin or Defense Minister Shimon Peres will be the Labor party's nominee for prime minister in the upcoming Israeli elections. If Peres is nominated, the Israelis may want him to accompany Rabin, for both diplomatic and domestic political reasons. A train of major Arab leaders—Sadat, King Hussein, Crown Prince Fahd of Saudi Arabia and, possibly, Hafez Assad of Syria—will follow the Israelis, with time out for Vance's late-March trip to Moscow, where the Middle East also will come up for discussion.

No serious negotiations can occur before Israel has a new government—perhaps after the May 17 elections, but possibly not until fall, if soldier-archeologist Yigal Yadin wins enough votes in May to compel electoral reforms and a new vote. But the administration presumably will want to show at least procedural progress by July, when the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries next meets to discuss oil prices. Carter flatly rejects any connection between Saudi Arabia's oil price restraint and US action in the Middle East, but the administration nevertheless will want to avoid the higher fuel costs that a negotiating stalemate might produce. By July the administration will want to have a Geneva conference scheduled—for late fall, perhaps—and be working on its agenda.

Geneva—The administration does not want the peace conference, if there is to be one, to devolve into fistfights and walkouts. So delicate preparatory work needs to be done. One suggestion, from Charles Percy, a Republican on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, is that Arab and Israeli delegates begin meeting "quietly, even secretly" on arrangements. Another obvious possibility is for the United States to act as intermediary, with or without Kurt Waldheim or the Soviet Union. The major roadblock on the way to Geneva—representation of the PLO—seems to be resolving itself. The Arabs appear intent on fielding a single, unified delegation, with Palestinian representatives tucked inside. When and how to involve the Soviets is now a major question. Another is what form the conference should take. One model is Versailles, where post-World War I conferees stayed in continuous session until their misdeeds were completed. Another method is to open the conference ceremonially, with a ratification of principles if they can be worked out in advance, then to let talk proceed in negotiating sub-groups. Of course the real decision-makers will not be in Geneva, so high-level meetings in Washington and the Middle East itself would precede the ceremonial signing of a "peace" agreement.

The Agreement—PRM 3 apparently covers possibilities

White House Watch

White House Watch will return next week. John Osborne has been busy preparing his collection of White House Watches from the Ford administration, to be published soon by The New Republic Book Company.

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from step-by-step through "interim" to "comprehensive." Nobody now favors Kissinger-style step-by-step "peacemeal" diplomacy because it failed to create self-sustaining momentum toward wider agreements. All sides seem to want something "comprehensive," but the word has different meanings. The Arabs want an agreement covering all geographic areas of dispute. But they do not want the end-of-the-road peace settlement that Israel talks about, including diplomatic relations, trade, open borders and comity. A panel assembled by the Brookings Institution in 1975 suggested a staged Israeli withdrawal process, over a period of years, accompanied by a phase-in of peace by the Arabs, "each stage being undertaken only when the agreed provisions of the previous stage have been faithfully implemented." Two members of the panel were Brzezinski and William Quandt, now his NSC deputy for Middle East affairs, giving one reason to think the Brookings model will find favor in the administration. The tidiest settlement would match an Israeli commitment to go back to its 1967 borders with an Arab agreement to give Israel full peace, all in stages. Unfortunately, neither side seems willing to go that far. If no such long-range agreement can be reached at Geneva, perhaps all that can come out will be first steps and agreed next steps—step-by-step by another name.

The United States role—The expectations of Arabs and Israelis, plus the attitude with which the Carter administration begins, suggest that this country will play a very active role in pushing for agreement. But how far are we willing to go? To the extent of security guarantees to Israel? Stationing of US troops in the region to police an agreement? What is the United States willing to promise or threaten to get each side to agree? Toward Israel, candidate Carter pledged an end to Kissinger-style "reassessments" and other cajoling tactics. He apparently intends to make Israel feel utterly secure in its relations with this country, and therefore free to make concessions. There undoubtedly will be dispute within the administration whether to increase US arms aid to Israel to the $2.3 billion Israel wants or whether to hold at the Ford administration's recommended $1.5 billion, retaining the $800 million difference as a carrot. Toward the Arabs, Carter promised "friendship," but he did not say how he planned to win and hold it. They expect the United States to squeeze Israel, which Carter says he won't do. He will have to talk the Arabs into giving peace, and Israel into giving land. That will require more of the iron in Jimmy Carter than the smiles.

Morton Kondracke

The only proof there's a shortage is the industry's more-than-dubious statistics.

They're Giving Us Gas, All Right

by James Nathan Miller

The companies that supply US energy are trying to convince Congress and the public that the present cold-weather crisis actually does prove that there is a long-term shortage of natural gas. If they succeed, the US soon will have a gas deregulation law that's based on data that are at best doubtful and at worst false. To understand what's involved, it's essential to realize that the deregulation question actually involves two very different kinds of shortage, which press accounts have jumbled together. There is a true, demonstrable shortage in *deliveries* of gas. The reasons for it are the apparent physical inability of pipelines to satisfy the demand created by the record-breaking cold wave, and the unwillingness of producers to meet this emergency demand at a controlled price when they know they can get several times as much if they can force the removal of controls.

The second shortage is something quite different. It is an alleged shrinkage in the country's long-term underground reserves of gas. The companies that own the long-term reserves—and claim that the shortage exists—also claim that the size of their holdings is a trade secret; as a consequence, the figures that could prove or disprove the existence of a reserve shortage are hidden behind a curtain of secrecy that the present cold spell has done nothing to pierce.

For many years the gas industry has claimed that underground stocks of "proved" reserves have been declining at an alarming rate. "Proved" reserves are the only ones that the country can be certain about. They represent gas fields that the producing companies have drilled into, measured with considerable precision and

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deemed to be economically recoverable. Beyond the "proved" reserves there are others labelled with adjectives representing the spectrum of geological speculation: "probable," "inferred," "possible," etc.

How much does the US now possess in these various categories? The most recent estimate of the industry's trade association, the American Gas Association (AGA), is that there are 228-trillion cubic feet of proved reserves now in the ground, or about a 10-year supply at the present national consumption rate. But nobody expects us to run out in 10 years, because geologists know that there are huge amounts of the less certain categories waiting to be discoverd; most estimates conclude there are between 700 and 1200 trillion more cubic feet of gas ultimately available; some go much higher. This means we probably have enough to carry us several decades into the next century *if we go out and prospect for it*. Which brings us to the industry's main argument for deregulation.

The producers say that, because government regulation is holding down the price of gas, they haven't been doing the expensive exploratory work that's necessary to move the "probable," "possible," etc. fields into the "proved" column. According to AGA's figures, the decline in proved reserves began in 1968. From 1945 to 1968, the gas companies managed to discover a lot more gas each year than the country consumed. So for 22 years our proved stockpiles kept increasing, until they reached a peak of 293 trillion feet in 1967. Since then, according to industry figures, new discoveries each year have totalled *less* than consumption, and the proved reserves have shrunk from 293 to 228 trillion feet. At that rate, we will run out of proved by the end of this century.

But the "proved" figures come from only one source: the gas producers themselves, who draw them up in complete secrecy. Thus for the critical set of statistics that underlie the whole deregulation debate, the country depends totally on the chief private participant in the debate. In the last few years several outside investigations have turned up evidence that these figures may be fundamentally incorrect. They may be a statistical delusion—a gross underestimation of the nation's true reserves.

Proved estimates require a large amount of raw data—core samples, pressure readings, voltage measurements, etc.—that can be obtained only by actual drilling into the gas pockets. Acquiring these data for all the country's 6300-odd gas fields is a colossal physical job, and only the gas industry itself owns the billions of dollars' worth of equipment necessary to do it. The only group the producers are willing to confide some of their information to is the AGA, for its once-a-year survey of the nation's total reserves. Each year the association assigns 100 industry geologists to its so-called Committee on Natural Gas Reserves. These geologists annually canvass the producers in their assigned areas for the necessary data to form their own estimates.

In 1970, responding to suspicions that had been voiced about the accuracy of the figures, the chairman of the Reserves Committee described the system in detail to the Federal Power Commission. He said the drawing up of the estimates was a rigorously supervised process specifically designed to eliminate any chance of manipulation by the producing companies. He said the companies gave the 100 geologists all the data they needed, and that the geologists, regarding themselves as public servants rather than as representatives of their companies, were scrupulous about insulating themselves from company pressure. All the geologists used the same precise AGA estimating formulas, said the official, and the resulting national estimate was "one of the most consistent and reliable series of statistics available anywhere." The FPC, which is known as one of the most supine of regulatory agencies in its relations with the industry it regulates, accepted this testimony at face value, and looked no further.

Last year a House committee headed by Rep. John Moss (D, Calif.) conducted an investigation that drew a very different picture of the way the process worked. Moss's picture was based partly on facts turned up by an investigation by the Federal Trade Commission of AGA's estimates in the Gulf of Mexico, and partly on testimony by industry officials, including some of the geologists who had drawn up the AGA estimates for the Gulf.

What Moss found was that the whole estimating process was dominated by a few of the largest gas producing companies. These companies were allowed to choose the geologists who served on the Reserves Committee, and they regarded these geologists not as servants of the public but as their own representatives. AGA made no attempt to make the geologists follow its own estimating rules, and in fact the AGA man in charge of the program admitted that he had no idea of what estimating methods they used. Under oath, the geologists admitted that they ignored AGA's definition of what constituted "proved" reserves and, in case after case, gave whatever estimates their companies wanted them to give. One admitted that his company drew up all his estimates for him. Another said that when a company refused to give him information on a gas field, he simply listed the field as "zero"; in one year he listed five such fields. Another geologist said that companies often refused to give him any information at all, and he was forced to make "ballpark" guesses based on scraps of information from the trade press. Moss turned up one huge field containing 400 billion cubic feet of gas that had been unlisted for two years, even though it had two platforms and 13 wells and its existence was known to the entire industry. If this single field had been included in AGA's figures, it would have increased the AGA's 1974 national estimate of new-field discoveries

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by 23 percent.

The FTC's investigators, after a five-year examination of AGA's estimating methods, had recommended taking the association and the companies to court for "concertedly maintaining a deficient reporting system" that produced "serious underreporting." The FTC commissioners rejected this recommendation on what appear to have been political grounds. Moss uncovered a memo in the FTC files recommending against any legal action that might encourage "continued PPC regulation into the distant future." The FTC investigation, now seven years old, drags on.

The obvious reason the companies have to give AGA incorrect figures is the propaganda value of proving that a national shortage exists. But there is a more immediately practical reason: The Supreme Court ruled in 1968 that the FPC could let producers *increase* the price of gas whenever AGA's figures showed that their rate of new discoveries had *decreased*. Thus the fewer new discoveries the producers tell AGA about, the more they can charge their customers. Interestingly enough, the first drastic drop in the new-discovery figures appeared in the AGA statistics that were issued a few months after this landmark decision.

The industry claims that AGA's figures are accurate because two national surveys of proved reserves—one by the FPC, the other by the Federal Energy Administration—came up with totals that were only a few percentage points different from AGA's. However, FPC and FEA both have been lobbying for deregulation; and though the two agencies claim that their surveys were completely independent of the industry, both surveys actually depended heavily on industry cooperation and in fact couldn't have been carried out without it.

The FPC, in its survey, selected 158 out of the nation's 6300 gas fields, and asked the industry for the raw data on these fields. On the basis of this information the FPC's geologists projected a national estimate that was only 10 percent different from AGA's. The FPC's methodology was developed by a "technical advisory task force" whose chairman and co-chairman were Exxon geologists, and a majority of whose members were industry executives. Three subsequent analyses of the 158-field sample by others all concluded that the sample had been drawn up in such a way as to minimize the possibility of finding underreported fields.

As to FEA's study, its dependence on industry-generated figures was also self-evident. In authorizing the FEA's survey, Congress gave the energy agency power to subpoena whatever raw data it needed from the producers. But FEA chose not to subpoena anything, even when companies refused to provide requested information. Instead, it used only what information the companies were willing to turn over voluntarily. Since this is the same information AGA depends on, it doesn't seem surprising that FEA's and AGA's reserves estimates were almost identical.

Besides failing to report reserves, the companies are withholding from the market large quantities of gas that they *have* reported. By law, when companies discover produceable quantities of gas in fields leased from the federal government, they are required to market it at the federally regulated price. But Moss's staff exposed cases in which companies—at the very time they were warning of a gas shortage—had failed to produce very large quantities of gas available in fields in the Gulf of Mexico developed under federal lease. President Carter's energy chief James Schlesinger was quoted last week in *Newsweek* as saying, "I keep hearing about gas that's been squirrelled away, but whenever we get close to it, it becomes evanescent." He should look at Moss's findings; they are not evanescent.

Here is one example of what the Moss committee discovered. By law, companies that lease oil- and gas-producing land from the federal government must turn over all their raw data on these leases to the United States Geological Survey. By subpoenaing the AGA's (hitherto secret) estimate of reserves in the Gulf of Mexico (all developed under federal lease) and comparing this to USGS's own (hitherto secret) estimate of the reserves in the Gulf, the Moss staff was able to make the first direct comparison between the AGA's detailed estimates of reserves in a specific group of fields and another set of estimates for the same fields that were based on the companies' own raw data. Moss found that the USGS estimate was *60 percent* higher than AGA's: 23.5 trillion feet for USGS, 14.7 trillion for AGA. Thus, in only 153 fields (2.4 percent of the nation's 6300 fields) AGA apparently had missed 8.8 trillion feet of gas. This is a little more than twice as much as the estimated 3.5 trillion feet of delivery curtailments that are involved in this winter's gas crisis.

The AGA insists that to compare its figures with USGS's is comparing "apples" and "oranges," because USGS said it was estimating "measured" reserves, while AGA uses the "proved." But USGS says that the two terms are "essentially synonymous."

From all the above, it seems apparent that the present 3.5-trillion crisis in pipeline deliveries caused by a record-cold winter tells us nothing about the more fundamental question of what the companies' reserves actually are and why they are not making them available in sufficient quantity. The answer to these questions will come when and if Congress uses its subpoena power to conduct a survey of the industry's holdings that is demonstrably and unquestionably independent of the industry's influence. I don't pretend to know what such a survey will prove; perhaps it will confirm the industry's figures. But it is startling to realize that the nation's basic energy policy is being formulated on the basis of a fundamentally important set of statistics supplied by an industry that has every incentive to misrepresent them.

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Stanley Kauffmann on films

Importances

Harlan County U.S.A. (Cinema V). Barbara Kopple, a filmmaker now only 30, spent most of four years making this documentary. It is uneven but unforgettable, an extremely moving, *engulfing* chronicle of a 13-month coal-miners' strike that began in 1973. The place is eastern Kentucky, Harlan County—"bloody Harlan," so-called from the labor struggles that took place there in the early 1930s. The film is a history of desperate heroism, and it's a sharp stab in the pants for those who think that labor strife belongs "back there" somewhere, that all unions now are wall-to-wall *richesse*, that the US is now pretty much a middle-class country snowed snugly under the frozen manna of the supermarket.

Kopple had done some editing and sound and camera work on documentaries when she became interested in miners in 1972. Councils, foundations and individuals contributed as she went along to keep the project going. (It cost $200,000.) But the picture makes you feel that it was made because the makers just said it was going to be made and wouldn't quit—Kopple, her chief cinematographer Hart Perry, her chief editor, Nancy Baker, and a lot of others.

So, thanks to her and them, we move through the heat and bitterness and (it's the right term) classic courage of oppressed workers fighting the powerful and brutal. The coal companies in question are owned by a power company which is owned by an oil company: safe in their size, they have both law and terrorism on their side, and we see the use of both. They lose. "They can shoot me, but they can't shoot the union out of me," says one gaunt-faced woman. That statement, out of two centuries' labor wars that we like to think are finished, is the banner of the picture.

Two elements mark the film particularly. First, the women—wives and mothers and daughters—are powerfully present, marching, picketing, getting jailed and picketing again. The only other documentary I've seen about women prominent in labor struggle is the French film *Coup pour Coup* (1971) which had some strength, but Kopple's film is stronger. Second, there is the music, straightforward lucid songs—"Which Side Are You On?," "Oh, Death" and a half-dozen others—that show once again the ancient truth: people in trouble anywhere always sing of their trouble.

The story of the murder of the Joseph Yablonski family by the thugs of Tony Boyle is interwoven. We see the Harlan picket lines at dawn; the frightening gunplay at night (Kopple and Perry were right there), the brains of a picket scattered on the highway by a scab's shotgun. (The murderer, says the film, was not even indicted by the local grand jury.) The shock of this death brings agreement from the owners, but Kopple is not interested in technicolor conclusions. She takes her film on, to show the national troubles that resulted when the new-broom president of the UMW, Arnold Miller, agreed to a new contract the next year that was ratified by only a four to three margin of the membership. The film tells us that the idea of an ending is not of the essence of this story.

Some sequences stand out: the conversation between a miner-picket who has come up to Wall Street and a New York cop, the reminiscences of an old wrecked miner with black lung. One astonishment that is consistent in the film is the way that life has cast the parts: the women fat with starches or thin with no nourishment, the quiet gritty men, the limping foreman leading the scabs, the honest-dumb sheriff, the patent smarm of the owners' stooges. Art would not have permitted this pat symbology: life commands it. And consistent, too, is the fierce concern of the people behind the cameras, their insistence on being there. The picture has some clumsy joins, some of them caused by circumstances, some (like the Yablonski story) by casting the net wide. But all honor to Barbara Kopple and her friends for this important film.

Providence (Cinema 5). The only important thing about Alain Resnais's new film is the performance by John Gielgud. But Resnais (*Last Year at Marienbad*, etc.) is so idiosyncratically mannered that his style is, by heavy implication, meant to be the film's *raison d'être*.

It begins like a conventional mystery, the camera gliding forward through woods and gardens until we see a gatepost with the name "Providence," and the first symbol smacks us in the visual chops. The story begins mystifyingly with deliberately disparate elements. After a while we begin to see its shape. A world-famous novelist (Gielgud) is dying of cancer in his huge country house. (Providence?) Between spasms, on which he comments with elaborate wit, as he continues to quaff Chablis, he plots a novel. What we see throughout the film are the various paces, sometimes contradictory or repeated or absurd, through which he puts the characters: his son, a successful barrister (Dick Bogarde), his daughter-in-law (Ellen Burstyn), a presumable ex-Army officer (David Warner), and a writer also terminally ill (Elaine Stritch). Surprises arrive in the last sequence when most of these people come to a (final?) birthday lunch with the novelist and we discover what they are really like, thus how his mind has been operating on them. (His fantasies include some vivid ideas on the "disease" of old age, including his own autopsy.)

All this is handled in lush Resnais style, camera by Ricardo Aronovich, who has worked for Louis Malle, and decor by Jacques Saulnier, who decorated *Marienbad*. The lushness and the mannerisms would not seem so suffocating if the film realized some theme or point. The script is by David Mercer, the English writer. (It's Resnais's first film in English.) Mercer wrote *Morgan*—which also starred David Warner—another film that never really decided what it was about. *Providence* does not explore morality or

Films Worth Seeing

The Marquise of O . . . One of the film world's loveliest transformations of great literature, by Eric Rohmer out of Kleist.

Mikey and Nicky. Elaine May's black-comic plunge into the underworld. Utterly nasty but minor Céline.

Network. Everything you've always known about TV, hyped up amusingly. All the sparkle and value of a zircon.

The Seven-per-cent Solution. Fine fun. Sherlock Holmes meets Sigmund Freud, and why ever not? Excellent cast.

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character or social attitudes, though it suggests these aims throughout: as we see more and more clearly, it's sheerly about the imagination and the unconscious of the dying novelist who is inventing the whole thing. The contrast between what he imagines and what these people really are makes the picture finish as a solo psychological study, dangling and unrewarding.

Bogarde, dyed hair and all, repeats bits of his previous performances quite well. Warner once again is only a long lump. Burstyn, whose hair is coiffured like Delphine Seyrig's in *Marienbad*, is hopelessly out of place here. She has given very good vernacular American performances, but, among these English actors, in Mercer's brocaded language, she sounds grotesque, speaking of "innapennence" and "a sense of gelt" (guilt). The script doesn't even give her the crutch of making her character American. Stritch can at least carry her weight in dialogue, but we are asked to believe, impossibly, that she has sex appeal.

However, there is Gielgud, on screen a good deal and on the sound track a good deal more as he "directs" the action. One additional blessing in having been born a speaker of English is the fact that, otherwise, the nuances of this fine artist's acting would be lost on me, no matter how well I might have learned English as a second language. What shading, what music—and never for its own sake. Everything he says is placed as if by divine order, the phrasing and pitch illuminating what he and the words are about. His lines are studded with profanities, and in the mouth of this devilishly gleeful, highly articulate character, every one of them made me laugh. And to see him, ruddy-cheeked, bald-pated, big-nosed, treating each moment of life left to him like one more gob of pate or gulp of wine, commenting on his pain like a spectator at a predictable black comedy—what a pleasure. What a *pleasure*. (And if you saw him lately in Pinter's *No Man's Land*, you can note how sharply varied this performance is while still unmistakably colored by the same artist.)

For Resnais himself, it's no longer possible to hope. He's consumed with artiness. (If he were an actor, he would, unlike Gielgud, be listening to his own mellifluous voice.) And under artiness there is always at least a whiff of stupidity.

Twyla Tharp, in Motion

Twyla Tharp's newest ballet *Happily Ever After*, premiered November 3 by the Joffrey Ballet, is her most daring and coherent work. After 11 years of choreographing, Tharp's style, her viewpoint on bodies and how to present them in motion, is as much a fact as Martha Graham's, Paul Taylor's or Merce Cunningham's. On the surface Tharp's dancers seem unaware of any formal dance conventions; they wear costumes designed like sportswear and lace-up jazz shoes rather than modern-dance bare feet or ballet slippers. Sometimes they have tantrums or sit-down strikes onstage, which cause the unexpected peppery rhythms in the choreography. But their "wilfullness" works as part of a logic of structure. Even when a dance seems like a chaotic patchwork of styles—ballet interrupted by "folk" steps from tap, toe, acrobatic, bugaloo, ballroom, and the everyday behavior of the dancers—it is always going somewhere. In fact, style for Tharp does not mean where the steps come from, but how they fit and feel inside the rhythms, how the dancers attack and rebound from them and cause them to crescendo. And in *Happily Ever After* the movements seem not so much borrowed as discovered in the dancer's bodies.

Happily . . . is supposed to belong eventually to the Joffrey Ballet, but on opening night Tharp's own company dancers performed in all four parts: the first quartet, Tharp's own solo, a second quartet for some Joffrey people and the final sextet for Tharp's Rose Marie Wright and men. On the next night there was both more and less of Joffrey: Tharp's solo had passed to a cool and articulate Ann Marie De Angelo, while the second quartet had been dropped, leaving a much tighter dance-construct

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of quartet, solo, sextet. When Joffrey dancers do all the parts it will be a different dance—even if the steps haven't changed. The Joffrey are repertory dancers, responsible for many styles in many dances. They will be challenged in learning and performing this one, as they have been in other Tharp ballets (*Deuce Coupe*, 1973, *As Time Goes By*, 1973, *Deuce Coup II*, 1975). Seeing Tharp's own dancers in this premiere showed again that they are the ones who cause her to evolve. They work with her constantly; their reflexes become her ideas. Every great dance stylist has needed a company to make clear to audiences the terms of his dance universe.

The universe of *Happily Ever After*, and of all Tharp's dances, is a peculiar place which makes perfect sense on its own terms. At the outset Shelley Washington is discovered in half-light, reeling and sliding to the floor as the Hired Hands (mounted above the stage behind a scrim) greet an unseen Nashville crowd. She looks surprised there—and Tom Rawe, who ambles in, seems equally misplaced. Tharp's stage is a sort of no-man's land. The dancers either stumble onto it in confusion or shoot on as if pursued from another stage, and when they meet each other it looks like pure coincidence. This stage-shyness probably originated in Tharp's anti-proscenium years, the '60s, but in the meantime she has made it not just funny but theatrically useful. Sudden comings and goings change the momentum in an instant. When the dance appears to wind down—just after it began—Rawe holding a limp Washington, Jennifer Way and Christine Uchida wandering about—suddenly Washington, who had disappeared (when?) comes back on a running dive into Rawe's arms and the dance moves ahead. This first quartet proceeds in spurts and stops and subsections of solo, duo, trio, through six songs to the final jittery "Alabama Jubilee," when the four run around stage-center in a clockwise scramble.

Still, individuals don't get lost in the frantic pace as they have in other Tharp dances. In fact, you can "read" the state of the dance in the solos, inseparable from the rest of the action. Tom Rawe, to a piece of "Cacklin' Hen and Rooster Too," flips about the stage like a pancake, jiggles into whiplashes, falls in push-up position where he whirls stiffly around in mock *tours-en-lairs* landing on his palms—extraordinary motions to see on a ballet stage. The others thereafter seem to be dancing in a loosened environment: we see Jennifer Way's windmill arms and strong twisting back; she shows a new performing force in the diving motion duet for her and Christine Uchida to the base twangs of "Fresno Blues." Uchida herself, a former Joffrey dancer, has discovered an eloquent waver throughout her body, as in a fun-house mirror. Shelly Washington has grown even more emphatic—and more comically vacant.

The solo by Tharp (or De Angelo) in the middle of the dance acts as support-pin for the whole: first it is spurting and persnickety like the quartet, then broad and layed-out like the final sextet in which Rose Marie Wright, Tharp's six-foot tall ballerina, takes the stage. She comes down the diagonal in a crouch and then unfolds; she dances with mosquito-like Gary Chryst, then with four other men whom Wright and Chryst pull on one by one from the wings (a reference to Balanchine's hornpipe in *Union Jack*, which had a small tribute to Tharp in it). The dilation of the stage by Wright and men in their relentless waves of gorilla runs, whip-turns and whirling jumps reverses the earlier inward-spiraling quartet. It also reveals the power and dignity of Wright, dancing in full abandon. After seven years with Tharp, Wright is still the source of some of Tharp's best inventions.

Tharp's practice of building a dance on, or for, particular dancers is crucial to the present scene, where technically proficient but styleless performers seem interchangeable. Tharp imitators (there are many) borrow surface features like jazz-shoes, sports costumes, cute slapstick and whimsical ballet—without Tharp's rigorous attention to costumes, lighting, rehearsal, and especially to roles of individuals. There are three dancers from Tharp's own company, however, who have struck out on their own as teachers and choreographers: Sara Rudner, Kenneth Rinker and Nina Wiener. None are mere imitators; all are working in the general Tharpian style—and the most finished among them is probably Wiener, who danced with Tharp only two years (1972-74).

The wit and ease of Wiener's first dance, and its use of the dancers' idiosyncracies, reveal the Tharp pedigree. She made *A Friend is Better than a Dollar* with students she had guest-taught for six months at Ohio State University's dance department. The piecemeal solos in the dance are a sort of test, as they are in Tharp's *Happily Ever After*, of how far individual dancers can vary inside the whole. Wiener has been spared, partly by Tharp's own progression, from apologizing for the sophistication of her choreography. Her most recent work, *Eliza's Rhythm*, shown on a Dance Theater Workshop program in New York, further explores her dancers' capacities. It is a string of solos in which the same motifs show up in different rhythmical contexts: first Alison Pearl's vigorous weight-slinging jump-dance to West Indies chants, then Judith Field's languid solo to '30s jazz, Tim Callahan's floor-dance in silence, with squats and dives and scooping recoveries, and finally Susan Rethorst's prance and shuffle to bluegrass. Wiener's dance phrases are less violent than Tharp's and they rise and fall over longer spaces of music. Her stage characters are correspondingly more reserved: they encounter each other serenely and show their wit more in surprise dance moves than in antics. Wiener's work, proceeding from Tharp's ground rules, has already acquired a different metabolic cast. That Wiener has understood so much of Tharp is a hopeful sign for the present—and a tribute to Tharp. Tharp's own career, which is still evolving, has already reinvigorated and clarified so many of the basic principles of dancing that most younger choreographers are challenged, and a few of them inspired.

Elizabeth Kendall

Elizabeth Kendall, dance critic, is completing a book about modern dance, theatre, vaudeville and fashion between 1900 and 1930, *Primitive Mysteries* (Knopf).

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Books Considered

Exodusters by Nell Irvin Painter

(Knopf; $12.95)

They came from Tennessee, Mississippi, Louisiana and Texas, riding the steamboats up the Mississippi to St. Louis, then traveling over land through Missouri to the Kansas frontier. With quiet hysteria, unreasonable hopes, and almost no money, thousands of black southerners fled the bondage which followed slavery—not to Liberia, not to the northern cities which weren't ready for them, but to Kansas. Those who migrated in the Exodus of 1879 were called Exodusters. In all, between the end of the Civil War and 1880, perhaps as many as 40,000 Afro-Americans moved to Kansas.

Blacks had been fleeing the South for centuries, during slavery and afterward, when the crop-lien system and vigilante violence tied them to the white man's land. In *Exodusters*, Nell Painter tells a scarcely known episode in that long history of flight.

But the Exodus does not take up enough of the book. And the actual people who settled and stayed in Kansas fade into the "faceless and undifferentiated" majority of Afro-Americans from which Painter seeks to rescue them.

Coming from the lower and upper Mississippi Valley, the migrants to Kansas must have had a way of life distinct from their highland and coastal brethren. Did they travel with their families and extended families? How long was the journey and where did they stop along the way? A map would aid the story immensely. If we could see distances and the lay of the land we could appreciate better the challenges of migration. A map would orient us to the Mississippi River and help us to visualize the slave trade, escapes and later migrations along that great highway.

Did the Exodusters own their horses or mules? If so, they were more likely to be tenant farmers than sharecroppers or farm laborers, and they would not be the poorest folk. Did they become renters and croppers in Kansas? What did they raise on their new farms? Did they try to grow cotton on the plains? By the end of the narrative we are impatient to know.

The sources for getting at all of this may not exist. The Exodusters "were poor, rural Southern Blacks not sufficiently Westernized to write their own histories," Painter asserts. Of course, in the urgency to leave and in the building of new lives there is not much time to sit down and write about it. But it is possible to read the white man's accounts and learn from them more than appears at face value. For example, Herbert Gutman has demonstrated how a plantation birth register, kept like a stockmaster's ledger, may reveal whole genealogies. Similarly, merchants' account books or blacks' own church congregation lists from Nicodemus or Topeka, Kansas, may be read—if they exist—with an eye to what the people who appear in the entries are doing among themselves.

My point is not to criticize Painter's research—her selected bibliography and the relevance of her quotations throughout the text show she is willing to travel far and search deeply. The problem lies in what questions are asked of the sources. It is a matter of emphasis, of choice.

Rather than focus on the social and material lives of the migrants, Painter follows the history of the colonization idea in the biographies of two leaders of the colonizing movement—Henry Adams, a faith doctor and political organizer from Caddo Parish, Louisiana, and Benjamin "Pap" Singleton, a Tennessee carpenter and coffinmaker whose belief in the divinity of his mission foreshadows Marcus Garvey.

They were farsighted, unafraid, independent men, eccentric and very different from one another. Each was remarkable in his own right—but they did not lead many people to Kansas. You could not call them Exodusters themselves. Adams never lived in Kansas; in fact, he was a Liberia man to the end. Singleton went to Kansas and stayed less than a year.

The custom of attributing leadership of the Exodus to Adams and Singleton "grew," Painter tells us, from a Senate committee investigation into the causes of black migration, and from Singleton's efforts, in particular, to memorialize his role. But, Painter finds, "The Exodus had no anointed leader. Rather than being duped by false leaders, the Exodusters rejected leadership altogether."

Why, then, focus on Adams and Singleton? Their prominence in the narrative gives them an achievement by association and elevates them to the category of "heroes" and "credits to the race"—a tradition of scholarship Painter warns us against in her excellent bibliographical essay.

Early in the book, it appeared Painter would take another direction and follow the people who became Exodusters more closely. She proves, succinctly and beyond doubt, that the initiative to leave the South was rooted in everyday oppression. Many historians have worked with the same kind of evidence; yet, Painter's presentation of "The Economics of Oppression" is startlingly fresh. She exposes the heart and sword of post-Reconstruction rural tyranny—the contract between landlord and farmer. A typical contract gave a landlord the "right of pledge" on everything raised on his land, on all the farmer's stock, tools and personal property, to pay the rent, seed and fertilizer bills, and anything owed from the year before.

This, it seems, would be sufficient cause to leave, given the means and opportunity to do so. The election campaigns of 1876, 1877 and 1878 sealed the new bondage. Stripped of their civil rights and terrorized for seeking political redress, thousands of black southerners left for Kansas.

Before she gets to the economic and political causes of the Exodus, Painter outlines southern race relations at the end of Reconstruction. This is a difficult job to do in a short space. It lends itself to generalizations about "paternalism" and "institutionalized antagonism," the substance of which must be taken for granted less and less the more we learn about southern history.

Painter seems surprised, even disappointed, that more blacks did not migrate to Kansas. At the end of her epilogue she writes, "The Exodus presented proof that Afro-Americans did not quietly resign themselves to the political or economic order of the Redeemed South . . . Yet, of the more than six million Blacks subjected to Southern rule, only a few thousand acted on their faith that a Promised Land of freedom and equality might exist for them somewhere in this country."

The demographic impact of the Exodus may have been greater than Painter allows. How many people

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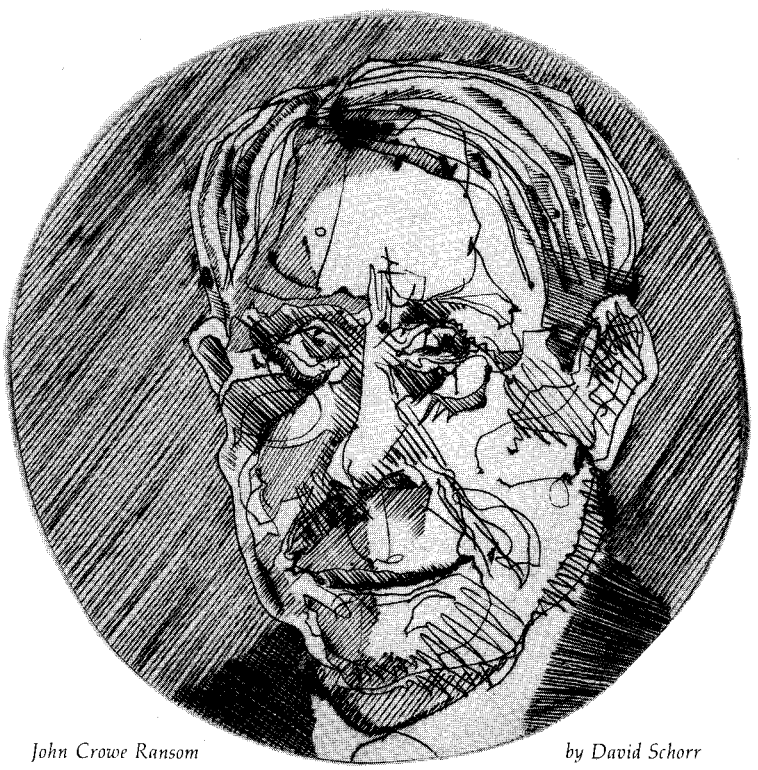
migrated on the "faith" of finding a "Promised Land" must be considered in proportion to how many knew about Kansas and had access to the Mississippi River—a number far below six million.

Not all Afro-Americans could be expected to share the "faith." Writing about the mood of blacks during the Civil War and Reconstruction, W.E.B. DuBois wondered why white people expected blacks to embrace the North. Whites in no part of America had welcomed free black people before the war. Why would they after the war?

Migration was not the only "proof" of resistance to the new order. Many who had a chance to go to Kansas, or go elsewhere from the South, chose to stay and struggle on the land they believed they had earned by generations of labor. Frederick Douglass was wrong to call the Exodus a "surrender." But he was right to see that migration "leaves the whole question of equal rights on the soil of the South open and still to be settled."

Theodore Rosengarten

Theodore Rosengarten is the author of *All God's Dangers: The Life of Nate Shaw* (Knopf).



John Crowe Ransom *by David Schorr*

Gentleman in a Dustcoat: A Biography of John Crowe Ransom by Thomas Daniel Young

(LSU Press; $8.95 paper)

John Crowe Ransom, who died three years ago at the age of 86, was one of the most fiercely creative and intriguing of all 20th century American literary figures. As poet, critic and teacher he played a part in the literary developments of his time. As writer and as man he influenced many poets and critics, almost always for the better. Yet his own remarkable personality was always rather elusive; there was a reserve about him that even his closest associates could never fully penetrate.

A biography of Ransom is very much in order, and Thomas Young's is admirably done. A great deal of evidence is presented, and the life and personality are skillfully equated with the career, yet the author has refused to force his own psychological theories upon his subject by "explaining" contradictions and magnifying compulsions. This biography is neither eulogy nor exposé, but the kind of intelligent, careful delineation that is appropriate to the subject.

Ransom was a deliberately "minor" poet. He did not combat human life head-on, but wrote beautifully controlled, classically proportioned commentaries on the nuances of mostly commonplace experience, playing violence and manners against and with each other to illuminate instances of the common, the low, the familiar in brief but brilliant light. At least a half-dozen of his elegiac lyrics seem perfectly made, definitive and timeless, destined to be in the anthologies of verse in English when most of the poetry of our century will have been forgotten.

As critic he was persuasive and powerful; his essays of the 1930s and 1940s, written in a style so personal as to be instantly recognizable yet at the same time artful and calculating, were of major significance in setting out the principles of the critical strategy to which he himself gave a name, the New Criticism. He made the *Kenyon Review* into the most influential literary forum of his time. "Now it is the Age of Criticism," he announced in 1938, and proceeded to enforce his assertion so well that almost two decades passed before the succeeding literary generation could make any major inroads upon that position.

As teacher his genius may be established by listing the names of a few of his better-known pupils: Allen Tate, Robert Penn Warren, Cleanth Brooks, Randall Jarrell, Robert Lowell, Andrew Lytle, Peter Taylor, Robie Macauley, Anthony Hecht. His teaching was exemplary rather than authoritarian. "Given his powerful and subtle intellect," Tate has written, "his inability to insist goes far toward explaining why he was a great teacher of literary young men. He would have detested a little coterie of Ransoms in his class. None of his students who became writers is like him; and they are not like one another."

Young's biography, beginning with Ransom's family heritage as the son and grandson of Southern Methodist minister, shows us a man whose career, however marked with changes and apparently unpredictable developments, was guided, on the conscious level at least, by a pervading reliance upon logic. He was, we are told, throughout his life always ready to debate anything; it was his way of thinking. But he was also a

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very passionate man, with strong convictions and a powerful ambition, and his logic was really a means of disciplining rather than of determining his most important actions and decisions.

As a student at Vanderbilt University, as a Rhodes Scholar, and as a young teacher in New England prep schools and at Vanderbilt he excelled in all that he attempted. No recluse, he was an avid amateur athlete. While serving overseas during World War I he supported himself on his poker earnings and saved his wages. His early interest was in philosophy, and he entered poetry by way of it; his reliance upon Kant was lifelong, and not only his criticism but his poetry and even his theology were based upon a philosophical dualism.

His first book, *Poems About God*, was published while he was stationed in France during the war. Returning to Tennessee he became the leading figure in the little band of teachers, students and townsfolk who met regularly to discuss each other's poems and began publishing the little magazine know as *The Fugitive*. In the group were Tate, Donald Davidson, Merrill Moore and Robert Penn Warren. Tate was the apostle of modernism. Ransom was more the traditionalist; his modernism was a strategy rather than a technique. By 1921 Ransom had entered into his mature style as poet, and from 1922 through 1925 he wrote almost all his best poetry.

From verse Ransom moved to theory: a system of esthetics predicated upon art as the "third moment," coming after original experience and then scientific, usable knowledge, and restoring the fullness of experience. From there he moved into theology—the need for myth, for a belief in wonder and the supernatural—and then to a view of the still largely rural South as the agrarian community that permitted the life of ceremony, manners, ritual, esthetic contemplation, in contrast to the all-devouring exploitative industrial capitalism of the city, with its deification of scientism and its materialism. With Tate and Davidson, who for different reasons had reached something of the same conclusions, he helped organize the symposium entitled *I'll Take My Stand: The South and the Agrarian Tradition*. For the next several years Ransom wrote about and studied agrarian economics.

By the mid-1930s his interest in literary theory had reasserted its primacy in his mind, however, and he began to publish the critical essays that proved so important in setting the tenets of the New Criticism. After moving from Vanderbilt to Kenyon College in 1937 he broke with Agrarianism, and meanwhile with the founding of the *Kenyon Review* entered upon his time of greatest influence in criticism and poetry. In his late years he turned back to his verse—not to writing more of it, but to revising some of his best poems, internally rhyming and regularizing them, writing new endings, in effect ruining them, as Tate said in calling it "John's mania . . . the last infirmity of a truly noble mind."

As Young's narrative abundantly shows, in almost all that Ransom did there was an element of calculation. He was an intensely private person, who moved deliberately from one phase of his life to another, each time turning his back on those who had shared the previous concerns. He had to have all his ducks in a row: each new enterprise or turn of thought was a logical extension of his premises. But as this biography also reveals, force, passions, ambition, a great zest for life, and a marvellously rich capacity for emotion also marked his personality. His best poems, in their grace of language, perception of disorder and rage for order, truly expressed what he entitled one of his critical books: *The World's Body. Gentleman in a Dustcoat* is just such a biography as John Ransom deserved: by which is intended a compliment both to the subject and the work.

Louis D. Rubin, Jr.

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Democratic Promise by Lawrence Goodwyn

(Oxford; $19.95)

The Populist movement is dead, but populist politicians remain very much alive. Among current notables, George Wallace, Fred Harris, George McGovern and Jimmy Carter have all been described as Populists or neo-populists. Simply to list these men is to underscore how ambiguous the notion of populism has become in contemporary America. The term evokes rather than signifies, and the cast of characters it calls forth ranges from adventurous progressives at one extreme to provincial, often bigoted conservatives at the other. If the man from Plains is indeed a populist, is he a Wallace-populist, a McGovern-populist, or some unforeseen version all his own?

Our confusion over the rubric, of course, derives from our confusion about the original Populists—the participants in the "agrarian revolt" that swept through the farming regions of the South and West during the 1880s and 1890s. Despite a large outpouring of scholarship, the people who took part in this stormy, complex protest have remained remote, contradictory figures, and the nature of the protest itself has consequently persisted as one of the more thoroughly controversial topics in American history.

Against this murky background, *Democratic Promise* by Duke historian Lawrence Goodwyn stands out as a fresh, new effort to uncover the original, core meaning of Populism. The merits of the work are substantial: the portrait of the movement is rich and detailed; the writing is graceful, precise, and alive with Goodwyn's own deep sympathy for his subject. Unfortunately, there are also flaws in *Democratic Promise*, and in the end the work emerges as a somewhat uneven performance, as a book that is creative, provocative, unquestionably significant, but not consistently persuasive.

For Goodwyn, Populism was basically an "experience," a "culture," growing out of a particular vision of human and social possibilities: the "belief," as he puts it, that people "could work together to be free individually." This "belief" appeared initially among hard-pressed Texas farmers who joined together in the mid-1880s to form the Farmer's Alliance and establish "buying" and "selling" cooperatives. The idea spread rapidly: in Kansas and throughout the states of the former Confederacy husbandmen long abused by rapacious middlemen and frequently reduced to debtor-tenants by the notorious lien system moved quickly to create their own cooperatives. But as the movement grew, Goodwyn shows, its purpose broadened. For the truth was that the cooperatives could not, by themselves, prevail against the marshalled opposition of merchants, banks and the deflationary pressure of a gold-based currency. By the end of the 1880s, Alliancemen were thus finding it necessary to call for public ownership of the country's communication and

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transportation networks, a flexible "fiat" currency, a more equitable tax system, and a "sub-treasury" plan which would give farmers expanded storage facilities and easier credit. Although versions of these reforms ultimately became law, they were too bold for either the Democrats or the Republicans of the late 19th century to even consider supporting. As a result, Goodwyn argues convincingly, the only way the farmers could hope to implement their program was to form their own political party. In 1892, at a convention in Omaha, the People's Party was born and named James B. Weaver its nominee for president.

Weaver did well, winning over one million votes against Cleveland and Harrison, but the Populists were unable to maintain the momentum. Inflammatory sectional and racist campaigns waged by the Democrats and Republicans, the emergence of a Western "shadow" Populism focusing only on the "free and unlimited coinage of silver . . . "—all this, Goodwyn contends, undermined the new third party's strength and paved the way for its decision to support the Democratic candidate William Jennings Bryan in 1896. But while he examines this "fusion" in detail, Goodwyn avoids the conventional argument that the People's Party died because of its entanglement with the congressman from Nebraska. The thesis announced in *Democratic Promise* is more grandly deterministic: the Farmer's Alliance turned political because it had to, but the radical People's Party would not have survived the "centralizing, culturally complacent nation of the Gilded Age" even if Bryan had never appeared.

Much of *Democratic Promise*—including its fatalistic overtones—is shrewd and compelling, but the net effectiveness of the book is weakened by several problematic elements. Goodwyn's generally useful distinction between Western and Southern Populism seems occasionally overdrawn, for example, and, because this distinction serves as a kind of litmus test for his evaluation of previous works on Populism, his judgment of competing interpretations becomes at times tendentious and unfair. The largest difficulties, however, arise from the fact that despite his emphasis on the "culture" and "experience" of Populism, Goodwyn never succeeds in showing precisely how, or how deeply, Populism penetrated the lives of Populist farmers. There are gestures: insightful cameo sketches limn the Populist leaders; excerpts from farmers' letters provide glimpses of the party's rank and file; and scattered mention is made of meetings, caravans and songs. But these clues fail to provide a coherent analysis of what Populism meant on a daily, local level. As a result, Goodwyn has written an essentially political history of a movement he is convinced was much more than an adventure in vote-getting.

Because he posits rather than elucidates their "experience," moreover, Goodwyn occasionally fails to sort through the contradictions which marked the Populist's outlook—and which continue to mark the outlook of some neo-populists. He does not, for example, measure the full cost of the tension between the Populists' radicalism and their frequent ambivalence toward blacks. Aware that "Populists behaved in various ways" toward their black neighbors, Goodwyn tries to weigh the relative strength of hostility and suspicion on the one hand and sincere efforts to build an "interracial . . . coalition of the plain people" on the other, but he ultimately seems to conclude that, on balance, the movement was racially progressive. Averaging out attitudes in this way, however, overlooks the fact that any significant degree of prejudice within their ranks represented a critical problem for the Populists. Precisely because it was a radical movement of the "plain people," Populism had to be solidly behind the notion of racial cooperation or risk significantly diluting its strength and identity. Goodwyn himself shows, after all, that even a minority of white populace unwilling to accept blacks as equal partners was often enough to prevent the "agrarian revolt" from mounting a viable, distinctive opposition to the overtly racist preachings of late 19th century Southern Democrats.

Goodwyn's inclination to gloss over the internal ambiguities of his protagonists also leads him to exaggerate the implications of their failure. Consistent in purpose, remarkably influential during their brief career, the Populists in *Democratic Promise* are depicted as the only group during the entire post-Civil War period that managed simultaneously to demand "serious structural reform" and to establish a significant role in domestic politics. A sentimental pessimism thus colors the closing sections of Goodwyn's book: the notion that the People's party was bound to collapse comes to imply that America's last best hope for redemption has slipped away.

But this too is a misleading perspective. It may be true, as Goodwyn insists, that no group or individual has succeeded in putting through Congress legitimate versions of Populist reforms—that the currency, banking and credit legislation supposedly inspired by the People's Party have actually aided just those forces of big business which the Populists so fervently opposed. The power of the "corporate state" to get the laws it wants, however, does not prove that significant opposition to domestic inequities died with the "agrarian revolt," or even that the Populists were entirely unique in their own day. Industrial workers of the late 19th century did not mass behind their own candidates, but it is impossible to ignore the courage and spirit of mutuality exhibited by the strikers at Pullman and Homestead. And in the 20th century, did the Wobblies not share the Populist commitment to "serious structural reforms"? And cannot the same be said for at least many of those caught up in the more recent civil rights and antiwar movements? Although the battles waged by these groups were obviously different from those undertaken by the People's Party, it would be hard to say whether in the long run they were qualitatively smaller or less consequential.

None of this, however, diminishes the importance of the Populists. For if these militant farmers were not as exceptional or as consistently progressive as *Democratic Promise* implies, they were, nonetheless, engaged in a profound project: the endeavor to gain mastery over their lives. It is this endeavor which motivated and focused their energies; and it is this endeavor which has caused the Populist heritage to resonate so continuously in American society. The demand by "plain people" for their fair share of independence and dignity is the common denominator of all the strands of neo-populism winding through our recent history.

Goodwyn clearly understands how central the quest for personal freedom was to the "agrarian revolt." *Democratic Promise* will not end all the arguments

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surrounding the Populists, but its skillful consideration of their effort to control their destinies goes far in assuring that these difficult, complex rebels will receive the respect and attention they deserve. And this achievement, in turn, is enough to assure that Goodwyn's work will be granted its own full measure of recognition and admiration.

Jonathan Prude

Jonathan Prude teaches history at Emory University.

Twentieth Century Journey: A Memoir of a Life and the Times Vol. 1: 1904-30 by William L. Shirer

(Simon and Schuster; $12.50)

Twentieth Century Journey is a memoir, not an autobiography. Autobiography is inner-directed and self-centered; memoirs look outward at a writer's public life and the famous people he has known. Even so, Shirer is conspicuously absent from his memoirs, whose emphasis is unusually external and historical. The virtue and interest of this book are in its detailed and accurate portrayal of America and Europe during the first 30 years of this century. (A second volume will take Shirer to India to cover Gandhi's revolution.)

Twentieth Century Journey begins with Shirer's transatlantic journey from Main Street to the Left Bank. The book ends with Shirer taking a home leave from Europe in the fall of 1929, arriving just after the stock market crash to find America plunged into Depression and hardly recognizable. Between these two journeys the author describes growing up in Chicago, the Chicago of Al Capone and Big Bill Thompson, and his high school and college years in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. The better parts of the book recall the paradisical years working on the Paris edition of the *Chicago Tribune*, Shirer's years as a foreign correspondent in London, Rome, Geneva and

"A spectacular life, impressively recorded"
—*The Washington Post*

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other cities, and finally his appointment as chief of the Vienna bureau of the *Tribune*, which gave him a ringside view of the disintegration of the European democracies and of the rise of fascism, particularly of the Third Reich.

Still, Shirer rarely gives one the feeling "you are there." He has less gift for evoking place than time and has a simple-minded habit of taking the reader on guided tours of celebrated landmarks each time he visits a new European city. His sense of place is superficial and his assessment of national character shallow and facile. (On meeting his first Russians in Paris, Shirer observes, "Somehow they seem to have more in common with us Americans than any other people, sharing a passion for talk, singing and spontaneous drinking. Perhaps it is partly due to the effect the vast horizons in both our countries have on our character and our outlook.") Shirer's feeling for time is more profound however, and his assessment of individual character generally persuasive.

Shirer provides vignettes of a host of colorful personalities he met in Europe. Among the best are those of Scott Fitzgerald, Sinclair Lewis and Dorothy Thompson, Isadora Duncan, Gertrude Stein and Charles Lindbergh. Fitzgerald appeared drunk one night at the *Tribune*'s offices and tore up copy until Shirer and his colleagues, James Thurber, Elliot Paul and Eugene Jolas, hauled him into a taxi and delivered him well soused to Zelda in the Fitzgerald's Right Bank apartment. Shirer interviewed Gertrude Stein on a few occasions and was repelled by her arrogance. She belittled other authors—Joyce she dismissed as "a second-rate writer"—and billed herself as one of the "Big Four" of American literature and the greatest living writer in English. Sinclair Lewis, whom Shirer overestimates as a writer (his literary taste favoring the documentary and sociological), was a close friend. Lewis and Dorothy Thompson spent 1932-33 in Vienna trying unsuccessfully to save their disintegrating marriage.

Shirer also draws delightful sketches of some of his journalistic bosses and colleagues, notably Colonel Robert McCormick, "an imperious and eccentric press lord," publisher of the *Chicago Tribune*. McCormick wanted the Paris edition of his paper to impress America's power on Europeans and to convey to Americans abroad good, red-blooded American views. Instead the Paris *Tribune* became the voice of Left Bank expatriates, written and read almost entirely by American bohemians. A journalist had to be inventive and imaginative in those days. Shirer describes how meager news sources were and how Thurber, in particular, was a genius at fabricating news. When Thurber was moved from the Paris to the Riviera edition of the *Tribune*, he virtually made up the entire paper out of his own head. He delighted in parodying President Coolidge; addressing a church convention, Thurber had Coolidge solemnly pronounce, "A man who does not pray is not a praying man."

Shirer's own style is bland and cliche-ridden. His reminiscences of Paris and Vienna rely heavily on such adjectives as "fantastic" and "fabulous"; he himself figures too frequently as a former hayseed chewing the fat with friends. (His women all have sterotypical, dual-purpose flashing eyes which he describes as scintillating with gaiety but as also containing still depths of brooding melancholy.) The journalist has an infallible sense of how to tell a story—structure, pace, the telling detail—but the writing is undistinguished. Thus Shirer's account of his big break, his coverage of the Lindbergh flight (which won him the position of foreign correspondent at the age of 23), is very exciting, but the excitement is that of of the feat itself and of the behind-the-scenes effort to get the news out fast.

Shirer maintains more changes have taken place during his lifetime, the first three-quarters of this century, than during the previous millennium. When he was a boy the automobile had not yet come to clutter the landscape with its paraphernalia—gas stations, parking lots, shopping malls, suburban sprawl. Railroads were flourishing. Cities were still gaslit; few people had electricity in their homes. There were no radios, television, refrigerators, air-conditioning, or electrical appliances, and few telephones. People worked a 12-hour day and a 70-hour week. By rapid stages first America, then Europe, were propelled into the automobile, aeroplane, nuclear and space ages. What impact has such rapid, spectacular change on the man who lives through it? Shirer infers that technological progress is accompanied by moral regression.

He notes how complex a fate it is to be an American in the 20th century and attempts to arrive at some philosophy of life. Nevertheless Shirer's book lacks a philosophy. He observes that all his life has been lived in the shadow of war and that war cracks the veneer of civilization, revealing how thinly it covers our savagery. Shirer has a dark view of existence, though he agrees with Epicurus: those who hanker for an afterlife do so because they have not known how to make the best use of the time alloted by nature, which is quite enough. The huge temporal and spatial panorama Shirer presents seems ultimately devoid of purpose.

"In such a world what meaning can there be in life?" he asks. Shirer's second volume, which will encompass the experience that enabled him to write *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich*, will no doubt pose this question even more strongly.

Doris L. Eder

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John Coltrane
by Bill Cole

(Schirmer; $12.95)

Coltrane's biographers—and Bill Cole is the third in the past 18 months'—grasp a portion of the saxophonist's persona to which they can respond, then magnify it and exhibit it as the total man. Thus *Chasin' the Trane*, by J. C. Thomas, reveals Coltrane the mystic messenger of cosmic love, whose music could touch everyone from rock guitarists to advertising executives; while *Coltrane*, by C. O. Simpkins, MD, portrays a verbally silent but musically seething voice of black anger and revolution. Cole has expanded his doctoral dissertation in an attempt to explore "John Coltrane as a musician and John Coltrane as a religious person" but ultimately creates another incomplete protrait: the "African-American" (Cole's term) who rejects Western civilization's intellectualism and immerses himself in the more intuitive creative processes of India, China and especially West Africa.

The elusive subject of these volumes profoundly affected the course of jazz through the most persistently evolving and intensely telescoped career in the music's history. Coltrane began to make

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his presence felt when he was 30, an age from which earlier innovators like Louis Armstrong and Charlie Parker could reflect on the fruits of their discoveries. He died before turning 41, never reaching those years of productive maturity in which Duke Ellington and Coleman Hawkins produced their greatest works. Yet Coltrane achieved the musical and public impact of the former pair and the inquisitive mutability of the latter, while maintaining an audience which grew larger and more reverent as he plunged deeper into abstraction.

Keening tone, staggering technique and absolute seriousness were constants throughout Coltrane's career, with the way-stations duly noted in Cole's narrative. After establishing himself as an explosive hard-bop tenor soloist in Miles Davis's 1956 quintet, Coltrane perfected a harmonically dense, virtuosic multi-note style while working with Thelonious Monk and Davis, which culminated in *Giant Steps*, his 1959 apotheosis of chordal-based improvisation. Having mastered harmony, Coltrane began working with modal foundations, pentatonic and other scales and triple meter in solos of unprecedented length; he formed a quartet (with McCoy Tyner, piano; Jimmy Garrison, bass; Elvin Jones, drums) and added soprano saxophone as his second instrument, which only enhanced the incantatory nature of his new direction. The marathon, monumental tenor solos "Chasin' the Trane" and "Impressions," from a 1961 nightclub performance, set off a reaction among those critics still committed to bebop; but the quartet pursued its course, producing the emotionally comprehensive and popular prayer-suite *A Love Supreme* in 1964. Still searching, Coltrane next embraced the multi-layered, ametric and speech-inflected new music of the New York *avant-garde*, several of whose members began recording and appearing with their champion. By the end of 1965 Coltrane had reformed his band, and the new group's performances suggested collective exorcism rites. Yet another plateau was glimpsed through the enlarged tone and rhapsodic sweep of his early 1967 recordings, but by July of that year he was dead.

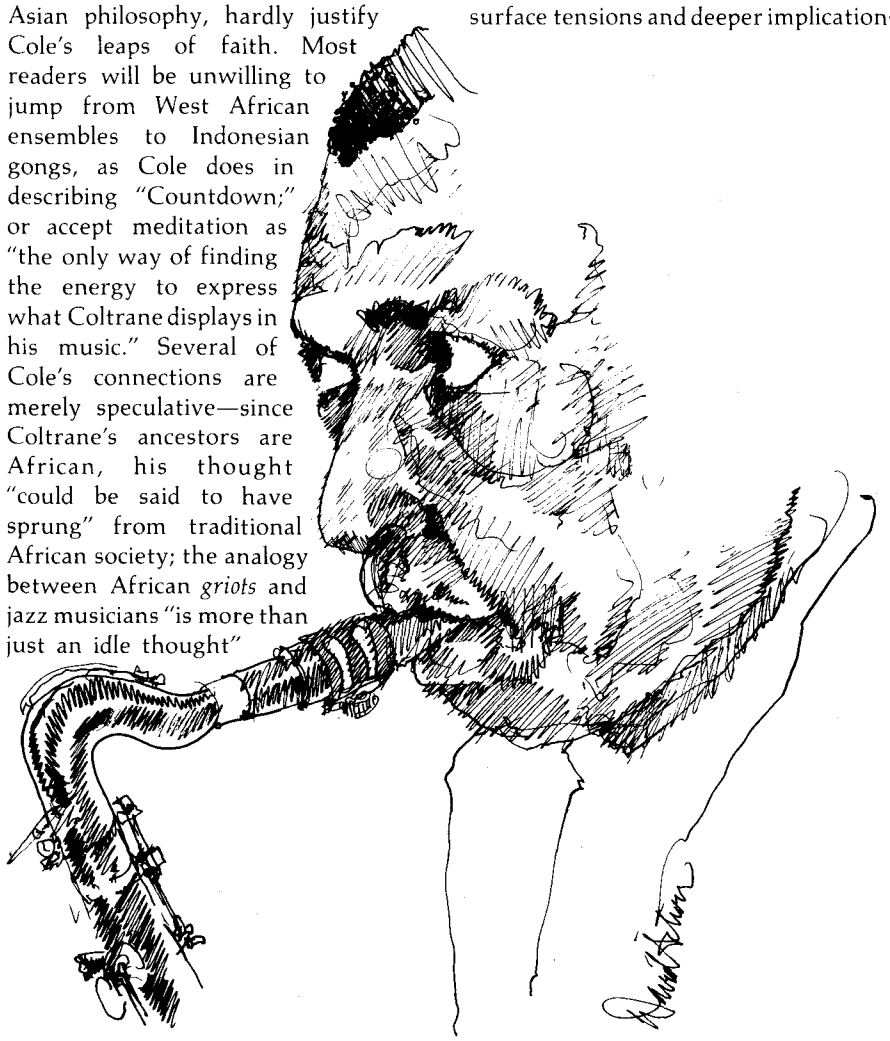
Cole eschews comprehensive biography (the first 28 years of Coltrane's life pass in five pages) in order to stress the musical change and personal growth. The process of "purification" which rid Coltrane of drug and alcohol addiction in 1957 is appropriately stressed, as is Coltrane's stoic approach to art; tenacious study of non-Western religion, music and culture; receptivity to the musical ideas of Davis, Monk, Sun Ra and Eric Dolphy; unselfish support of younger players; and difficulties in accurately reflecting his progress through recording. All of the basic material is present; still, *John Coltrane* does not synthesize the basics into a successful life study.

The impact of Coltrane's religious thought on his musical development is repeatedly stressed without the benefit of a convincing explanation. Family members with strong religious ties (both grandfathers were ministers; Naima, his first wife, practiced Islam) are mentioned in passing only, yet long sections are devoted to the theories of Fela Sowande, the Nigerian folklorist who has become Cole's mentor. Pages of Sowande's writings on Yoruba and Ibo music and philosophy introduce most chapters and occasionally suggest central parallels between Coltrane's music and that of Africa (the persistent use of pentatonic scales and triplets, for example); but this information, plus other references ranging from astrology to Asian philosophy, hardly justify Cole's leaps of faith. Most readers will be unwilling to jump from West African ensembles to Indonesian gongs, as Cole does in describing "Countdown;" or accept meditation as "the only way of finding the energy to express what Coltrane displays in his music." Several of Cole's connections are merely speculative—since Coltrane's ancestors are African, his thought "could be said to have sprung" from traditional African society; the analogy between African *griots* and jazz musicians "is more than just an idle thought"

—while others carry deceptive profundity (traditional Yoruba priests and most musicians spend years learning their trade, but so do corporate lawyers). Cole insists that religion must be a living force to save art from mechanical contrivance, yet his portrayal of bassist Garrison and drummer Jones as "two excessive people" hardly suggests the appropriate spirituality.

Cole is equally dependent on the expertise of Andrew White, a multi-instrumentalist who has transcribed over 200 Coltrane solos, for much of his musical insights. To the extent that Cole discusses Coltrane's evolving approach he has made a valuable contribution to the Coltrane bibliography, but only snippets of solos are included, and 49 of the 53 examples are taken from pre-1960 recordings. The mix of musical and philosophical description creates a very episodic enterprise; Cole might have tightened both arguments by separating the material on musical style, as he did in his earlier book on Miles Davis.

The main trouble with Cole's book is that it does not offer a coherent, convincing vision. *John Coltrane*, like the earlier biographies, fails to unify the surface tensions and deeper implications



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of this most enigmatic musician; and for an author so determined to elevate content above technique, Cole hardly conveys the overwhelming emotional impact of a performance like "Chasin' the Trane." Another flawed study, leaving those who seek greater insight, or the definitive biography, to follow Coltrane's example and keep searching.

Bob Blumenthal

Bob Blumenthal is the rock music critic for the Boston *Phoenix*.

The Back of the Book

Entertainers of the Year

On January 16, in Caesar's Palace, Las Vegas, the American Guild of Variety Artists presented its Georgie (after George M. Cohan) awards to "entertainers of the year" in several categories. The "animal of the year" went to Benji, a beige dog who accepted his trophy on location in Athens where he is making an autobiographical movie. Eydie Gormé received her "female singer of the year" award in London. The Captain and Tenille couldn't make the ceremonies either, but another couple of equal merit accepted the award of "group of the year" for them. The "country-and-western entertainer of the year" was John Denver, who also didn't show. Neither did the year's music entertainer, Lawrence Welk. Johnny Carson did show: to do a magic trick with three silver rings, and to thank the Guild for voting him "entertainer of the year."

I have nothing against Benji or Eydie, and the few, if constant, hostilities I bear toward The Captain and Tennille, John Denver and Lawrence Welk do not extend to begrudging them their Georgies. I don't begrudge Carson his trophy either, but I do wonder on what standard he becomes "entertainer of the year." Given that this was just another dismal awards show from another dismal dump, with the now painfully familiar show biz prattle, maniacal dance numbers and perpetually delighted audience of pros; given that no one cares about such awards; given that even for the recipients they have no commercial or personal value, and so forth—still, what idea of entertainment is contained here?

Entertainment is "the action of occupying attention agreeably." It comes from *entretenir*—to keep among, or hold mutually. To entertain is not merely an act of amusement but of hospitality, a mutual holding of guest and host, a pleasing reception, an accommodation. One can have a great deal of company, but poor entertainment, said Pepys, not envisaging the "Tonight Show," though assessing it accurately. Besides a great deal of company the "Tonight Show" boasts Doc Severinsen, a nightmare of fashion, Ed McMahon, a dreamless Lenny who bellows "Ho" to appease his master; and the master himself, "entertainer of the year," looking more fit and Satanic every night.

Carson probably isn't worth dwelling on, but it's curious to note his evolution, particularly since to one group at least he has come to represent entertainment at its best. Gone for good is the engaging young man from Nebraska who first hosted "Do You Trust Your Wife?," then "Who Do You Trust?" two versions of a very funny quiz show. Carson had verve in those days, and the ability to be surprised by humor, not merely to seem so as he does now. Most of all he had the necessary fear of audiences that propelled him toward them, seeking an accommodation, a mutual holding. Now fearless, no longer a showman, he has become a private life on stage; his contract disputes, divorces, squabbles, romances, drunks, out in the open, worked into routines. With nothing to hide, he addresses his public of millions like Claude Rains as the invisible man, half-mad, half-bored with his transparency. That's entertainment?

Of course, ideas of great entertainment do change from time to time. In the

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Greek myth of Philomela, for example, Philomela and her sister Procne, annoyed by Procne's husband Tereus for ravishing Philomela and cutting out her tongue, decided to entertain the man one evening by serving him his son for dinner. In the 18th century, visits to Bedlam, London's Bethlehem Hospital for the insane, were considered great entertainments, much as UN tours are considered today. Queen Esther entertained Haman handsomely, as we know, for he hung about her house long after the banquet.

So perhaps we're on the edge of a new conception of entertainment again, with Carson at the vanguard. Carson happened to win this year because he's been at his act longer than most; but if private business gone public is in fact our idea of entertainment, the Georgie could as easily have gone to Wilbur Mills or Wayne Hayes. A sure contender for next year's award is Clay Felker who continues to shriek foul at Rupert Murdoch for threatening to debase the high journalistic standards of *The Village Voice* and *New York* magazine. That's entertainment. Figures in the news are no less entertaining than those more formally designated, and since each group seems to wish to merge with the other, the pool of contestants will soon double.

There's nothing new about public interest in the private, preferably seemy lives of performers, nor in conceiving of such interest as entertainment. Newer, however, is our acknowledgment of certain performers as unattractive, and being drawn to them nevertheless, not because they're good at what they do, no matter how unpleasant their characters, but because of the unpleasant characters *per se*, because they are a main part of the acts. Candor is all, even if falsified. Spite and petulance are at least as desirable as a pretty face. And nothing is as entertaining as violence. (Will you ever forget the late great Charlie Manson?)

This attractive unattractiveness may derive from TV talk shows, where nothing is asked of performers but to be themselves. Between giggly plugs of their latest records and newest movies, they fumble for some character to play; and like anybody at a party who has been introduced as entertaining they growl, sputter, or die with their pre-packaged anecdotes. If they aren't unattractive enough on their own, emcees like Carson help them along. In no time flat unattractiveness becomes the act; then the "entertainers" spin off to TV variety shows bearing not a skill nor even a specific identification—will someone tell someone what Alan King is supposed to be?—but merely the personality who was introduced as a (comic, soprano, juggler) some years ago, and now is a shouted name followed by eight bars of brass.

Since Carson perfected the brassiest of talk shows, I suppose it makes sense to call him entertainer of the year. Me—I like the old timers, who had that sense of hospitality as well as something to show. George Jessel, for example, did his routine for Woodrow Wilson in 1920, and sustained it for 50 years. "Hello, Mama," he began, holding the prop phone. "This is Georgie . . . your son . . . yes, the one from the checks. Mom, what's with Anna's feller? They got engaged finally. Good, good. When'll they get married? He has to wait? Wait for what? They've been going together for 10 years and—oh, he's waiting for a job. Did he at least give her a ring? He's waiting for me to lend him the money. I see. Look, Mama, what's the hurry, why does she have to get married? She's still a young girl. After all, 38 ain't so old . . . Willie wants to talk to me? Okay, put him on. Hello, Willie. Ya a good boy? Good. How're ya doing in school? Teacher's got a grudge against you. I see. You want my autograph. Only last week I sent you four and a few weeks before I sent you—oh I see, for every six of mine you can swap one of Eddie Cantor's. Put Mom back on the phone."

Burns and Allen called their vaudeville act "Lamb Chops." "I used to say to Gracie, 'Do you like to love?' And she would say 'No.' 'Do you like to kiss?' 'No.' So I'd say, 'What do you like?' and she would answer 'lamb chops.' So I would say, 'A little girl your size, can you eat two big lamb chops alone?' and she would answer, 'No, but with a baked potato I could.' "

Then there was the prophet Abraham, perhaps the greatest entertainer of them all. One evening when Abraham sat at the door of his tent waiting to entertain strangers, as was his custom, an old man appeared, weary, stooped, leaning on a staff. Abraham received the stranger warmly, washed his feet, gave him supper, but noticed that the old man did not pray before his meal. The guest explained that he did not believe in God, so Abraham threw him out into the night.

God called to Abraham, and asked why he had banished the stranger. When Abraham told him, God said: I have suffered that man a hundred years,

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although he dishonored me; could you not have endured him a single evening? Whereupon Abraham went out, fetched the old man back to the tent, and continued to entertain him as lavishly as before.

Troupers aren't what they used to be.

Roger Rosenblatt

Correspondence, *from page 7*

social power to state power (to quote Nock) would be too high a price.

So please watch those inconsistencies, such as saying that India is not really a nation, but then turning around and saying that Indira's rape of "her" people is the answer. Her means do not justify any possible end.

John Mattar
Milford, Pennsylvania

Philip Hart

To the editors:

I have rarely read a more affecting tribute to an American politician than Eugene McCarthy's description of the late Senator Philip Hart ("Philip Hart," *TNR*, Jan. 15). It is accurate, it is perceptive, it is deserved. The superb quotation from Plutarch, describing the meaning of politics, is very apt. It fits Hart; it also fits McCarthy. The allusions to the religious dimension of political life, properly understood, are also fitting, in the circumstances. Vietnam was not simply a mistake; it was an unholy war. Until this fact is widely perceived, there is little chance of changing our foreign policy for the better. This is why, I, for one, so despair of our foreign and military policies, and why I see no evidence of a change of heart and mind on the part of the new Democratic administration of President Carter. His own statements, his cabinet appointments, his close advisors-to-be show that the mentality that led us into Vietnam still prevails. Hart understood this; and so does McCarthy.

This is why I did not waste my vote in November, when I voted for McCarthy for President of the United States. I would do it again, if I had the chance.

Henry David Aiken
Brandeis University
Waltham, Massachusetts

Speaking Ill

To the editors:

When asked to comment on the just-announced death of Senator Joseph McCarthy, Adlai Stevenson had the good grace to respond: "De mortuis nil nisi bonum." Could you not have restrained yourself for a further week or two before unleashing Ken Bode ("Kindly Omit Flowers," *TNR*, Jan. 15) on Mayor Daley?

William B. Neenan
Ann Arbor, Michigan

We Lawyers

To the editors:

I'd like to cast a vote against pseudonymic articles in *The New Republic*. TRB has been at it so long that he has what we lawyers call a prescriptive right to remain anonymous—and anyway, everyone knows who he is. But someone who refers to himself as Suetonius has appeared on the scene, and when I read his stuff I'd like to know whose stuff I'm reading. What's more, I think it's quite inconsistent with the magazine's devotion to openness and candor to deny me the identity of one of its authors. If Mr. S. doesn't want to reveal who he is when he writes for the public, he shouldn't write for the public—not in your columns at any rate.

Roger S. Kuhn
Bethesda, Maryland

We'll Never Say

To the editors:

Who is "Suetonius," author of the devastating profiles of Vance and Brzezinski? Clues: (1) a preoccupation with the Harvard Government Department as the first arbiter of all things (references to Fainsod, Friedrich, Ulam, Huntington); (2) an insider's knowledge of the shifting politics of the foreign policy establishment, going back to the '50s; (3) most important, an insistence on Henry Kissinger's superiority as an intellectual and master of politics, and a concern over the fate of Kissinger's reputation. Conclusion: Suetonius is Henry Kissinger. Right or wrong?

Jon Wiener
Pacific Palisades, California

In reply: Wrong.

The editors

TRB, *from page 2*

nies. . . . [T]he majority of slaves were adequately fed, well cared for, and apparently happy. . . [B]lacks suffered less than any other class in the South" in the suicidal economic system.

But what has this got to do with the argument? It could be all very high-toned in a plantation of the better sort, George Washington at the top but a slave at the bottom. It is a dark shadow on the Declaration of Independence and on the Constitution—until amended by the Civil War.

Congressman Mitchell brings us down to the present, fresh from *Roots*. He has a new symbol for anger and militancy. The civil rights movement seems to have lost momentum. The Supreme Court, with four Nixon conservatives, tiptoes away from liberal decisions of the Warren court. The Mexican border, every night, sends up illegal aliens competing for low-wage jobs that blacks might otherwise hold. There are five or six million illegal Mexicans already here, it is believed. We can build nuclear defenses against Russia but can't seem to guard the Texas border against the highest birth rate in the world.

The income gap between blacks and whites in the US has widened; black unemployment is twice that of whites; for teenagers in ghettoes unemployment is around 50 percent. Will there be stronger reaction to such disparities in the aftermath of *Roots*? Very likely.

Or take foreign affairs. Could the US have dropped 500,000 tons of bombs on Cambodia, which didn't even have an anti-aircraft gun, if it had been white? There's a kind of implicit racism in our international dealing. There aren't many blacks in the State Department.

It is fascinating to speculate on the emotional result of *Roots*: the exposure of 130 million people suddenly to the shocking reality of American slavery; many of them almost certainly were visualizing it for the first time. It was *Uncle Tom's Cabin* in a week. My feeling is that a jolt like this has later consequences; there are new symbols.

The basic practical question is, when will blacks be politicized? They tipped the balance in the 1976 election though many didn't vote; they could do it again. Things are changing. Last week a new black ambassador to the United Nations, Andrew Young, took his oath from a black Associate Justice of the Supreme Court, Thurgood Marshall. Kunta Kinte would be pleased.

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Washington Diarist

Glancing Heavenward

I was delighted to read the comments on the weather by the director of long-range predictions at the National Council for Atmospheric Research (which, by the way, occupies one of the most beautiful modern buildings in the country, sitting on its mesa among the foothills of the Rockies). He said we still don't know were it comes from. All we can do, he said, is plot some patterns: winds are whistling up to Alaska, picking up cold air there, and whistling down to Florida; on their way across the Atlantic they are whistling up to Greenland, picking up more cold air, whistling down to Europe, and then up to the Baltic. All that he could really say was that these Westerlies have momentarily gone crazy. He resisted the notion that a new "ice age" may be approaching, saying that this winter's troubles are only regional, confined to the northern hemisphere. Nevertheless, some people at NCAR have been warning the government for three years to prepare for some years of exceptional weather. Even the CIA has been warning about climatic changes. Right for once. At least when Joseph dreamed of the seven fat years and the seven lean years, the Pharoah listened to him; but not our government.

The redesigned Senate dining room now has a redesigned menu. The famous bean soup does not appear on it, although it is available to any senator who asks for it. Jay Treadwell, an assistant in the Capitol architect's office, said in explanation: "Any dining room that has to depend on its bean soup recipe to draw customers can't be much of a place." Any office which has an assistant who can make such a fatuous remark can't be much of an office.

I watched President Carter's "fireside chat", and although there was indeed a fireside, his talk was not exactly what one means when one asks a friend to come over for a chat. It is he who has resisted the name, which the media still insists on giving to it, and I thought that on the whole he pulled it off well. But what was interesting was to notice the difference in doing it on television, compared with Roosevelt merely speaking over the radio. As one listened to FDR, one could imagine oneself with him by that fireside. But in the long shots of Carter there was the empty chair opposite him, which gave the impression that the man had gone mad and was talking to himself. In the closeups he had the gaze of all people when they try to talk directly into the camera, as if they are just missing our eyes, and speaking past our right ears. All the same, there is much to be said for the relaxed air, for the open cardigan, for the not quite casual way of sitting. Perhaps only symbols; but symbols of a lack of tension.

Washington Cathedral—which is the National Cathedral—is again short of money, and having to reduce its staff and many of its activities. This is the kind of thing that makes me angry. The Cathedral sits on its high hill, a remarkably successful imitation of the Gothic style: an asset to the city, and a symbol that is acknowledged all over the nation. Washington should be proud of it, and care for it. Washington is full of public men of ample wealth who could endow it, as men in their positions would have endowed cathedrals in Europe in the past. These men (and women) come to Washington to find position and fame, and they are stingy in what they give to the life of the city from their pockets, except when they leave pictures to one of the galleries. They use the Cathedral, and may even expect to receive a memorial service there when they die. But they will not give it a penny, which is why building it has already taken 70 years. This is not a question of denominations. When Dwight Eisenhower lay in state there, it was not a denominational occasion, but a national one.

At the meeting last week of the second World Black and African Festival of the Arts and Culture, a delegate from Gambia proposed that a resolution should be passed, calling for the release of all African intellectuals and artists now in jail. He was loudly applauded, but then no such resolution was offered. Many other speeches lamented the present condition of intellectual life in African countries. This is why the speaking out for human rights needs to be taken seriously: the tolerance of a double standard hurts most the countries who are given the benefit of it. I once tried to get from the United Nations a detailed estimate of the numbers of people killed and imprisoned in third world countries since the European empires withdrew from them. The UN has figures for just about everything, including estimates of the death toll in the third world *before* the empires withdrew. But there are no statistics about the present—or at least no statistics available.

I do not agree with the Vatican's pronouncement last week, reaffirming the prohibition against the ordination of women as priests, but as always its rigorously argued case is fascinating—rather like Marxists arguing from their own canon. It used textual references to suggest that Jesus was a kind of early prophet of Women's Liberation in the desert—except on this issue. It based its argument on the nature of the eucharist, saying that the priest who celebrates it acts "*in persona Christi*, taking the role of Christ," and that a woman cannot do that, lacking what St. Augustine called a "natural resemblance." One wonders what "natural resemblance" Cardinal Cushing, say, bore to the figure of Jesus.

The weather. It is the only subject of conversation, and it should be. The avenging finger of God! We build a sea wall, feet thick of reinforced concrete, and God whips up a storm, and the wall crumbles. We build a dam, a marvel of ingenuity and beauty, and God sends a flood that crumples the dam into nothing like a piece of paper in our hands. We create the most extraordinary "fuel delivery system" that can be imagined and, his breath now icy, God whips us into little corners of our rooms to keep warm. Oh, Almighty God! I have heard of Your infinite mercy, but I think it is too often finite. I feel like St. Teresa of Avila, as she struggled through rain and mud and flood on some misson for You. She swore at Your providence, then to hear You say: "Teresa, I send these trials to test My servants." She lifted her head and answered: "No wonder, Lord, You have so few."

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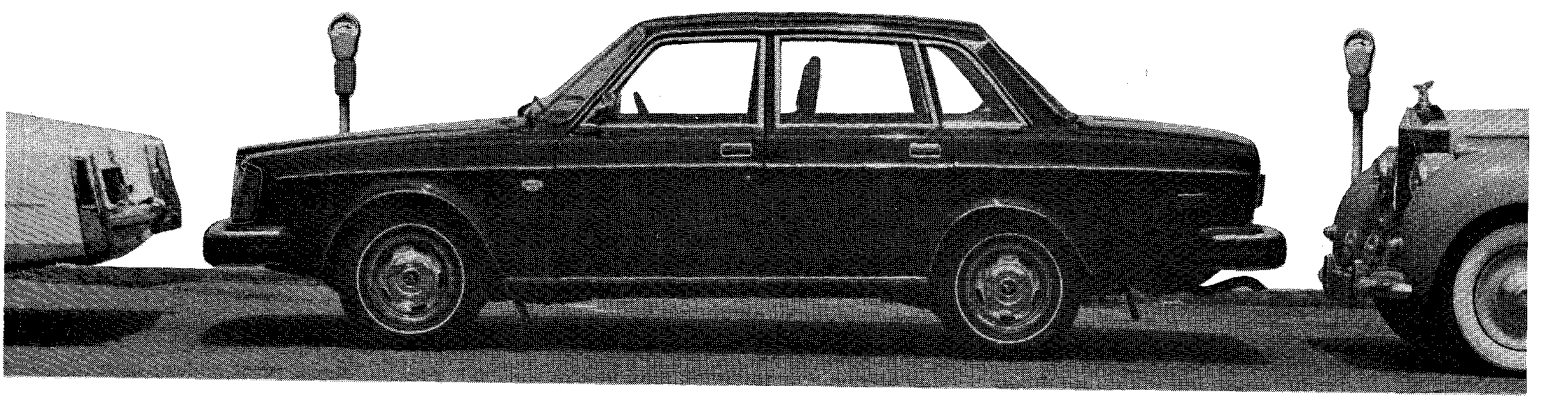

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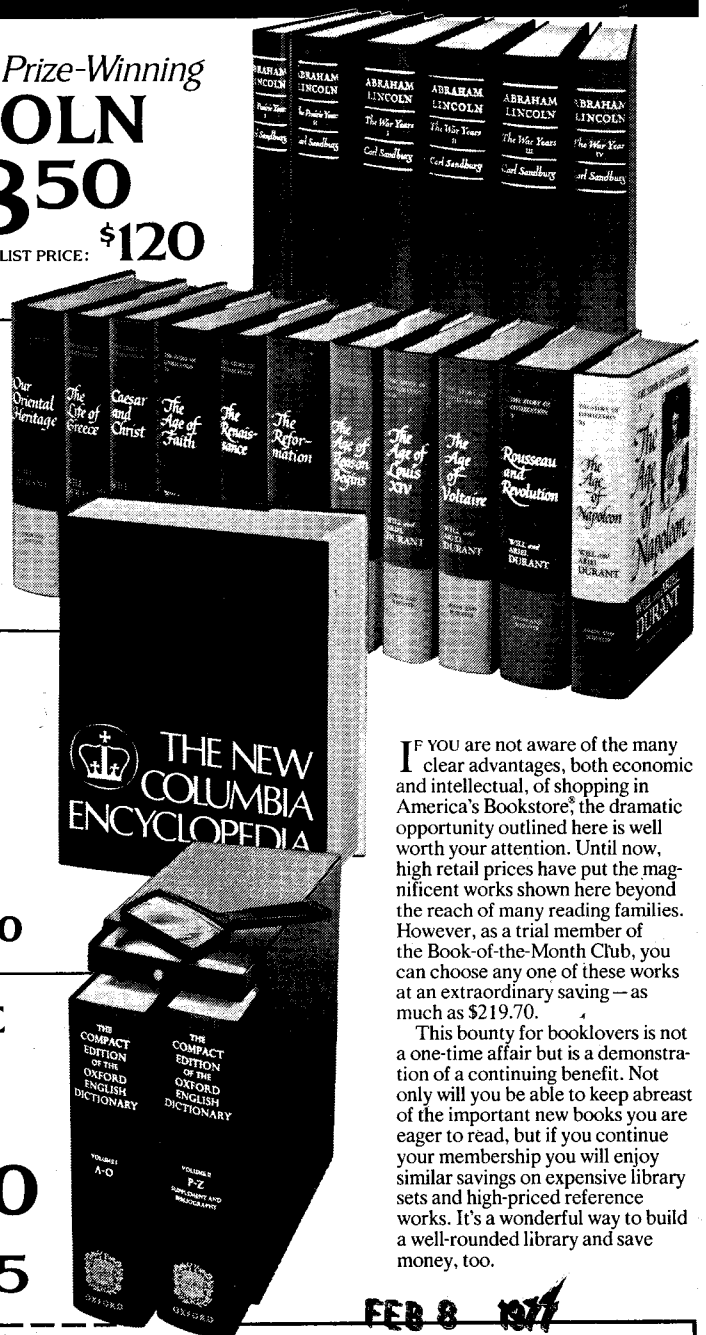

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